



# Malherbe Monthly

Number 56  
March 2009



**Incorporating Liverton Street & Platts Heath**

Useful contact names and telephone N<sup>os</sup>.  
BOUGHTON MALHERBE/GRAFTY GREEN

County Councillor	Vacant	
Borough Councillors	Jenny Gibson Richard Thick	890200 891224
Church Wardens	Kenneth Alexander Joan Davidson	858348 850210
Parish Council Clerk	Pat Anderson	858350
Village Hall bookings	Doreen Walters	850387
KM Correspondent	Christine King email: <a href="mailto:christine-king@hotmail.co.uk">christine-king@hotmail.co.uk</a>	07710 457297
Gardening Club	Sue Burch	850381
Church Choir	Doreen Hulm	850287
Sunday School	Mair Chantler	859672
Yoga	Sue Burch	850381
Neighbourhood Watch	Keith Anderson Sue Burch	858350 850381
Incumbent	Rev: Dick Venn email: <a href="mailto:dickvenn@gmail.com">dickvenn@gmail.com</a>	858195
Benefice Office	Michelle Saunders email: <a href="mailto:churchoffice@lenvalleybenefice.org.uk">churchoffice@lenvalleybenefice.org.uk</a>	850604
Mobile Library	Wednesday afternoons	
St. Edmunds Centre	Tricia Dibley	858891
Fresh Fish delivery	Friday afternoons at approx. 2.20 by Post Office	01580 754300
Council Rubbish Freighter	See article in magazine	
Malherbe Monthly Production Team		
Mike Hitchins	Advertising: <a href="mailto:mf.hitchins@virgin.net">mf.hitchins@virgin.net</a>	858937
Mike Hitchins	Editor: <a href="mailto:mf.hitchins@virgin.net">mf.hitchins@virgin.net</a>	858937
John Collins	Treasurer	850213

The views expressed in “Malherbe Monthly” are not necessarily those of the Production Team; publication of articles/adverts does not constitute endorsement and we reserve the right to edit!  
Anything for the April edition should be left in Grafty Green Shop, or contact Mike on 01622 858937 ([mf.hitchins@virgin.net](mailto:mf.hitchins@virgin.net)) by **20<sup>th</sup> March**

**Front cover:** ‘Spring emerging from Winter!’  
Picture taken on 13<sup>th</sup> February by John Collins.

## News from St. Nicholas Church

### **Prayers for the Parish**

On Monday mornings prayers are said at St. Nicholas Church for the people and the parish. They start at 9.30 am and last for half an hour. If you would like a prayer said for someone or something, please let the Rector, Sally Alexander or Joan Drury know.

### **Lent Groups**

Lent Groups will meet again throughout the benefice during Lent. There will be a group meeting at Bowley Farm at 10.30 am on Thursday mornings starting on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Please let Sally Alexander know on 01622 858348 if you would like to come along. There will be other groups meeting in the benefice during Lent - for more information about these please ring Michelle at the Benefice Office on 01622 850604.

### **Lent Lunches**

We will be starting our lunches again on Wednesdays during the season of Lent. We have six venues throughout the Parish. Each lunch will be at 12.00 noon until 2.00 pm. Entry will be by donation. The lunches help us to collect for Christian Aid Week, which is held during May. We serve delicious soups with fresh bread and coffee to finish. Come and join us for a very pleasant lunch break with some lively conversation.

The **Lunches** will be held on:-

4<sup>th</sup> March at **The Old Rectory**, Boughton Malherbe hosted by Vanessa Goodwin

11<sup>th</sup> March at **Bowley Farm**, Sandway hosted by Sally Alexander

18<sup>th</sup> March at **Ivy House Farm**, Liverton Hill hosted by Joan Davidson

25<sup>th</sup> March at **Weirton Villa**, Grafty Green hosted by Joan Drury

1<sup>st</sup> April at **Foxes Earth** Grafty Green hosted by Pat Anderson

8<sup>th</sup> April at **The Village Hall**, Grafty Green hosted by Sylvia Close and Janet Collins.

## **START**

Start is a course discovering Christianity in six small group sessions. Life! What is it like? Some say it's a dream, others call it a joke. If you have questions and are looking for answers, then why not make a START! For details contact Michelle Saunders at the Church Office 01622 850604 e-mail [ChurchOffice@lvb.org.uk](mailto:ChurchOffice@lvb.org.uk) or Dick Venn, Lenham Vicarage, Old Ashford Road on 01622 858195 or e-mail [dickvenn@gmail.com](mailto:dickvenn@gmail.com) or Helen Venn on 01622 858195 e-mail [helenvenn@gmail.com](mailto:helenvenn@gmail.com) The Course has started but I'm sure you can still join in, at the time of going to print there will be still 4 sessions remaining.

## **Mothering Sunday**

Mothering Sunday falls on 22<sup>nd</sup> March this year and we will be holding a service at St. Nicholas Church, Boughton Malherbe at 9.30 am. Children, bring your mummy along and thank God for giving you a kind and loving Mother to look after you. You will also be able to take home some flowers to say thank you for all that she does for you during the year.

## **Annual Parish Church Meeting**

The Annual Parish Church meeting will be held on Tuesday 31st March in the Village Hall at 7.30pm for the Vestry meeting and 7.45pm for Annual meeting. We will elect the Parochial Church Council, the Churchwardens and other officers. We are still without a secretary and I'm sure our stand-in secretary would be pleased to relinquish this post to another. It would be good if someone would come forward to take on this job for us. It would be fantastic if a few more people would take an interest in running the Church, I know many of you are very fond of the Church and are glad to see it in good repair, but it would be great to have a few younger people around who would be more hands on.

**Joan Davidson**

## **Rubbish!**

It's nearly 2 years since I moved to Grafty Green. I enjoy living here for several reasons. What do I like?

Friendly residents - and their dogs!  
Fish and chips at the King's Head.  
The fantastic village shop.  
Being part of the Len Valley church family.  
The Ferns Cafe  
The ladies I have coffee with.  
Cream teas at Boughton Malherbe church  
The Malherbe Monthly.

And, last but by no means least, the beautiful countryside and the endless variety of walks. I am spoiled for choice.

Any dislikes? YES! The litter which spoils the verges along our roads.

I have been given a 'grabber' (£9.99 if you want to buy one) and on sunny days I take it and a large bag and pick up litter: drink cans, plastic bags, parts of cars and many other items which should have been put in the correct place.

Some think that I am mad while others, more kindly, regard me as eccentric. But surely we all want to protect our environment from disgusting litter?

I used to live in a village where the Parish Council organised an annual spring cleaning morning. Volunteers were kitted out in high visibility clothing and given black bags and we all worked with a will to clean up our village.

So, how about it councillors? We could meet on the Green and be rewarded for our efforts at the end of the morning with a drink in the King's Head. Over to you!

**Joan Drury**

## **Platts Heath Primary School**

At the end of last term we held a Valentine Disco for the children at Grafty Green Hall, it was a great success, everyone really enjoyed themselves and we have had many requests to put on another one not just for the children but for the adults too.....well we haven't quite decided on a date for the children's one yet but we will be holding a 70's/80's disco for the adults on 28<sup>th</sup> March at St Edmunds Hall Platts Heath. A smaller venue but it still promises to be a great evening. We are so lucky to have a choice of venues for staging these events and even more fortunate that that the prices are very reasonable and the key holders are very friendly and accommodating.

We've only been back at school a couple of days this term but already the children have been busy making pancakes and learning new maypole dances to dazzles us yet again at this years summer fayre and we are getting excited about other events we've got coming up this term

- World book day on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March. The children have to come to school dressed as one of their favourite book characters.
- Red Nose Day on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March. The children have already started preparing for this day deciding not only what they're going to wear (something red) but also what they can do to raise some money. A great cause and one the children absolutely adore.
- Easter is not to far off and we will have our usual Easter Egg Hunt, that's enough to get me eggcited.... Sorry, just the thought of chocolate.....why do we always crave what we've decide to deprive ourselves of?

Amidst all this fun, the school seems to be ticking along nicely, numbers are good with 71 pupils at the moment and with a full intake predicted for Sept 09 that should keep our numbers up which has cheered up our head teacher Mr Ian Priddle who we welcome back after his operation. He is still on the mend but getting a bit better every day.

If you would like to know more about our school please contact our head teacher Mr Ian Priddle on 01622 850316.

**Angie McElvanney**  
On behalf of Platts Heath School

## **Norma Jones**

The Platts Heath School communitiy were saddened at the death of former teacher, Norma Jones in January. Norma retired from teaching last Summer (2008). She took ill during the time leading up to her retirement.

Norma had worked at Platts Heath Primary School for over 23 years. She was an extremely dedicated and hard working teacher. She had many strengths, but music and foreign languages were her passion, as were the children who were in her care. Norma ran music clubs every single lunchtime. The children took part in large Music Festivals and musical productions. They even performed in Jersey. End of term productions were always first class and many, many people will forever have their own memories of their favourite plays.

Everything was done with a huge slice of fun. Norma and Janet Coleman (teacher) would often pen their own songs, the results were often hilariously funny. The children loved these performances.

Norma regularly organised trips to Lille, in France. We would exchange trips with L'Ecole St Edmund's.

Norma had a wicked sense of humour and was a great practical joker. Anita Robinson (Teachers' Assistant) and Sylvia Morrell (former school secretary) had been close friends and colleagues for many, many years.

Teacher's always want to make a differnce. Norma did that...to many children. She will be a sad loss to our community.

**Anita/Sylvia/Ian**

## **Family History Enquiry**

My husband and family are interested in finding out more of where their mother worked. They know that she used to work for a Dr. Laird at the Lenham Surgery. Can you let us know any other information that you may know or how do we find out any other details on social history in your area.

We hope that some of your readers may be able to help.

The person concerned was a Alice Maud Hammond born in 1922 and believed to have lived in South View in Bearsted .

Hope you can show some light on this side of the family.

We can be contacted by e-mail on [justineatkinson@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:justineatkinson@tiscali.co.uk)

Best regards - Justine

### **GRAFTY GREEN GARDENING CLUB HAMPSHIRE GARDENS - WEEKEND TRIP**

Come and join us for an interesting and enjoyable weekend away visiting the Gardens of Hampshire. We will be staying at the Holliday Inn, Southampton leaving on Friday 5th and returning on Sunday 7th June.

The cost of the entire trip is £200.00 which includes Bed, Breakfast, Evening Meals, Coach and all entry costs.

For further details please contact Carole Frost at (01622) 850221 or Mobile 07817 459 186

## How about joining a Yoga Class?

Yoga exercises promote increased flexibility, postural alignment, balancing muscle groups and counter-acting the overuse of specific muscles used in our everyday activities. Yoga also focuses on being able to breathe with control; using the breath with movement to bring balance between the body and the mind.

Generally, the class will start with a warm up through the joints and stretching the muscles and then practicing sequences of moves that improves co-ordination and grace, strengthening areas of the body and building stamina.

Each session finishes with a relaxation to allow the mind and body to feel rejuvenated. To be able to relax and reduce stress provides a natural way to boost the immune system, sooth the nerves and promotes a positive state of mind.

### **Sue's Yoga Classes**

*Yoga for agility, strength, stamina and relief from stress*

current class at

GRAFTY GREEN VILLAGE HALL, CHURCH ROAD

Thursday Mornings - **9.30 - 11**

Mixed ability class but also suitable for beginners

£5 a session

Would like to join a class but this time doesn't suit?

Would you join at a different time/day?

How about a Wednesday afternoon or evening?

**For further details contact Sue Burch on 01622 850381**

Trial session half price.

## **News from Maidstone Council**

February 10, 2009 - Ref: KJ/090210

### **Rare object puts Maidstone on the map**

An extremely rare object, which is thought to be just one of about 20 items in the world, has been discovered at Maidstone Museum. The rare find, which is thought to be 4,000 years old, has caused a stir of excitement among the museum keepers.

The Early Cycladic III Kernos, a vessel that incorporates 6 cups around a globular basin on a fluted base, is an unusual item especially in the complete condition it is in. There are known Kernoi at the British Museum in London, the Louvre in Paris, Sevres in Paris, The Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and The New York Metropolitan Gallery of Art and other museums.

Maidstone Museum's Kernos was brought into the limelight thanks to museum keeper, Giles Guthrie and third year Liverpool University student Kayleigh McMahon, who is currently studying archaeology and ancient history and working with Giles at the museum. Keeper of human history, Giles Guthrie said: "We have had it in the museum for some time but only recently realised how unusual it was. A Greek expert from the British Museum came down and had a look at our collection and they flagged it up as being very rare."

The Kernos was used to make offerings to the Gods and each cup would have been filled with a different substance such as milk, honey and oats. We know from descriptions that the filled vessel would have been held on the head of the devotee until sanctified by the priest. This type from this period is predominantly found at Phylakopi on Melos, the same home as the most famous sculpture in the world – the Venus de Milo.

The Kernos is decorated with basic geometric patterns in brown or black clay. The decoration of the find is not very clear but this does not negate from the importance of the vessel at all, some decoration can be seen and it follows the basic pattern known from other items from this period. Later on the vessels appear to lose the stand and develop into a different shape that is used up until the end of the Roman period. What the museum has found is a very early example that took over from the perhaps rarer stone version.

Maidstone Museum, in St Faith's Street, is now planning to have Christie's and Sotheby's to come down and value the piece and has plans to exhibit the Kernos in the future.

Giles added: “When the Kernos is exhibited it will contribute to our understanding of Prehistoric, Archaic and Classical Greek pottery, and will be the oldest piece of Greek pottery on display in the collection outstripping the Archaic ware by over a thousand years. “This item completes the story of the evolution of Greek Painted Pottery within the gallery as it portrays the beginning of the process which is then followed through until the demise of the Ancient Greek civilisation.

“When the New York Met acquired their Kernos in 2004 they described the piece as strengthening the museums holdings immeasurably, and lets hope this piece will do the same for Maidstone Museum.”



## GRAFTY GREEN GARDENING CLUB 2009 PROGRAMME

Date	Topic	Speaker
6 <sup>th</sup> January	AGM + Vegetable growing - hints and tips	Sissinghurst gardener: Amy Cabey
3 <sup>rd</sup> February	Dry Garden	H. Newman
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> March</b>	<b>Butterflies</b>	<b>Steve Weeks</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> April	Spring Show & River Medway Part 2	Graham Johnson
Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup> May	Plant Sale	
? May	Local garden visit	TBA
5 <sup>th</sup> June –7 <sup>th</sup> June	Weekend visit to Hampshire	
12 <sup>th</sup> July	Lullingstone Castle – World Garden visit	
4 <sup>th</sup> August	Social at Myrtle House, Grafty Green	
1 <sup>st</sup> September	Autumn show & talk - TBA	
6 <sup>th</sup> October	Village Signs	Avice Harms
3 <sup>rd</sup> November	Kent in the 1900 century	Bob Ogle
1 <sup>st</sup> December	Gardening quiz and supper	

Further details from Sue Burch on 850381 or Rosemary Smith on 850526

- ❖ Membership to the gardening club is only £5 for an action packed year
- ❖ Regular meetings on the first Tuesday of each month in the village hall at 7.30 pm unless otherwise stated. 75p for members and £1 for visitors.
- ❖ The club enables members to swap plants/seeds, share ideas and improve their growing skills.
- ❖ Meetings are friendly and informal; visitors are always welcome; refreshments included.

## The Grafty Gourmet

This is an authentic Greek recipe using minced lamb. Alternatively, minced or ground chicken can be used.

### Lamb Souvlaki Kebabs with Tzatziki

Serves 8

#### Kebabs

2 lbs minced lamb  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
3 table spoons soft butter  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon ground cumin  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon ground allspice  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon cayenne pepper  
Pinch of salt  
Dash of fresh ground black pepper

#### Tzatziki

1 cup Greek Yoghurt (no other yoghurt will do)  
1 clove very finely crushed garlic  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
5 fresh mint leaves chopped very finely  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of finely grated cucumber (de-seeded)

#### Serve with

Sliced tomato  
Thinly sliced onion  
Lightly grilled pita bread

1. Knead the minced lamb, onion, butter, spices, salt, pepper and cayenne in a bowl. Then form into sausages of about 4 - 5 inches long, and about an inch in diameter. Cover and leave in the fridge for about 1 hour.

2. For the Tzatziki, Drain the yoghurt through a sieve, to get rid of the watery content of the yoghurt. Sieve the cucumber and dry on a clean tea towel. Whisk together the yoghurt, olive oil, mint, garlic and cucumber in a bowl. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

3. Preheat oven to 190 degrees Celsius and cook the kebabs for 12 - 14 minutes.

These can be eaten as a sandwich, by placing a couple of the kebabs in side each pita bread, and adding the sliced tomato, onion and tzatziki. Alternatively, the pita breads can be put on a plate, with the kebabs on top, covered with the salad and tzatziki, with a garnish of finely chopped parsley.

**The Grafty Gourmet**

**Answers at the back (don't look first!)**

<b>Find the missing word?</b>	
1	James _____, Actor who went from Cold Feet to Murphy's Law
2	_____ Theroux, Documentary Maker
3	The _____, Bill Haley's backing group
4	_____ Hard Luck, Classic Paul Newman film
5	The _____ Blues, Group that had a hit with Go Now
6	_____ Misty For Me, Thriller with Clint East as a DJ
7	Monty _____, TV Gardening expert
8	The _____ for Red October, Film with Sean Connery
9	_____ Caspian, Title character in the latest Chronicles of Narnia
10	Mull _____, No 1 single for Wings

**Grafty Green Heating Oil Syndicate**

Grafty Green has its own Heating Oil Syndicate. We have over 200 members who benefit from cheaper Heating Oil when ordered in bulk. If you are prepared to buy at least 500 Litres 3 or 4 times a year and are fed up with Oil Tankers trundling through your village every week causing damage to our roads, not to mention the environmental cost and you want to join, email [europa.13@btinternet.com](mailto:europa.13@btinternet.com) or call Keith Anderson on 01622 858350. We now reach out to over 25 villages in the Ashford and Maidstone area. This club is non profit making.

**Keith Anderson**

## **Grafty Garden Cuttings – March**

One or two dry, sunny days and I am out digging, weeding and trying to catch up on all the other jobs, including re-organising the borders - most of which were established in the 1980's/1990's so are overgrown, full of moss and in desperate need of restoration. It's a really good excuse to buy some of those plants and shrubs I have longed for, but not had the space to house.

It is the month to prune blueberries, roses and summer flowering shrubs such as Buddleias, Laverters and Caryopteris and to move shrubs and divide and move perennials. Everything needs feeding: plants, trees and shrubs with blood, fish and bone or growmore, the soil with organic material and the lawns treated with a dressing of moss killer, although if the latter has been applied, remember not to compost the first two or three cuttings but dispose of by other means.

Onion sets, shallots, parsnips and early potatoes should be planted/sown, but only if the ground is not too wet or cold. Test this by sitting on it: if it feels cold, do not plant! Better to wait, even if it is a little late.

Seed sowing tips: use clean pots or trays and fresh compost. I use multi purpose and mix in vermiculite, approximately two thirds compost to one third vermiculite, but special seed sowing mixes are available. I also sow into as small a pot as will comfortably accommodate the number of seeds being sown, without crowding, so I can pack as many as possible into the propagator. Fill the container to within 1 cm or 1/2 inch of the top and press down lightly to exclude air pockets: a small, round piece of flat wood, with a handle is useful for this, sow the seed evenly and cover with a layer of more compost or vermiculite. Generally, the smaller the seeds, the less covering needed. Water well, either by a can fitted with a fine rose or by immersion for a few seconds, in a few cms of water, drain and place in a propagator, in a plastic bag in the airing cupboard, on a window sill or in a cold frame covered with glass. Check frequently and bring into the light as soon as seedlings appear, or they will quickly become drawn and leggy and useless.

Seeds with no instructions may need experimenting with: try a few at a time and use different methods. Much may depend on where the plant originated. A colder winter climate may mean the seeds need stratifying: i.e. a spell of frost and cold, so either sow in autumn and stand outside, covered with glass or put the seed in a little dryish compost in a plastic bag, in the fridge for a few

weeks, then sow. A warm climate will probably mean the seeds need warmth to germinate and some, like those of many Australian natives, need smoke in the process, though throwing them on to a bonfire might be a little too drastic, but I am open to suggestions on that one!

Many seeds keep for several years but some need sowing fresh - parsnips especially should be purchased new every year, followed by peppers and small seed like Lobelia, which latter must be sown on the surface of the compost and can be mixed with a little dry silver sand to aid even distribution.

**Rosemary Smith**

### **Charity Family First Aid Session**

#### **Come to the aid of Channel Swimmer.**

The Platts Heath Mother and Toddler group will be holding a First Aid session on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2009. This will coincide with the toddler group between 10am and 1pm in the St Edmund's Centre at a cost of £20. The session will cover babies, children and adult first aid.

First Aid trainer, Chris Hills from Lenham Road, Platts Heath, is aiming to fulfil his dream of attempting to swim the English Channel and in doing so raise vital funds for the Maidstone and Rural Communities branch of the Alzheimer's Society. The proceeds from the course will contribute to this worthy cause.

The course is available to the community and should there be sufficient interest, a further date (possibly an evening/weekend for those who are unavailable during the day or would prefer to attend without the background activity of the toddlers) will be arranged. If you are interested in attending on 27<sup>th</sup> April or would like to register your interest for the running of another course please contact Sarah or Chris on 01622 859174 or e-mail them at [sarah@plattsheath.fslife.co.uk](mailto:sarah@plattsheath.fslife.co.uk).

Chris has already swum the channel as part of a relay team but will be undertaking his solo attempt later this year. The swim, known as "The Mount Everest of swimming", is scheduled to take place between 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> September. Training has now begun in earnest and was initiated with a customary "Boxing Day Dip" in Dover Harbour at the end of 2008.

**Sarah Hills**

## **St Edmunds Centre Platts Heath**

Our Line Dance club were very happy to see Julie back this year. Since she and Colin moved away she has been reluctant to drive over the hill during the winter months but has missed us so much she has braved the little lanes - welcome back Julie. I must apologize to any new people hoping to start coming along as some weeks we have cancelled at the last minute due to the poor condition of the lanes covered in snow and ice. However it looks like the worst is behind us so it should now be all systems go. We meet on Thursday evenings 8 pm-9 pm entrance £3.

The committee are delighted the centre is being used more and more now. I visited the Little Angels mothers and toddlers group one Monday morning recently and what fun they were having and the smell of the toast was really inviting. Any new mums wishing to go along on Mondays can ring Karen Yardley on 858208 for more details.

Whilst on the subject of the toddler's group one of the fathers, Chris Hills, is raising money for THE ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY, by running a first aid course covering babies, children and adults on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2009 from 10 am to 1 pm. The course will cost £20 per person. For further details telephone his wife Sarah Hills on 859174. A nice link between the generations.

Our treasurer and I went to view some upholstered chairs for the centre and were impressed with what we saw - so we should have them in a week or two. We have also had a quote for curtains to the stage area. We have applied for a grant towards the cost of them and now await the outcome of our application. This will make a neat finish at the Nave end of the hall and make life easier for any productions performed in future. The added bonus of course is the echo will be reduced.

I have taken some bookings for private users and hope we can get more as the word gets around how nice and cosy the hall has become. It is the right size for family celebrations. You don't get lost but still have room to let your hair down, with no risk to the furniture and carpets in the house!

The AGM of the St Edmunds Centre School Lane Platts Heath will be held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009 starting at 8pm. All members of Platts Heath are welcome.

Anyone wishing to hire the hall can do so by phoning me on 858891 or Duffrey Robinson on 850463.

**Patricia Dibley Secretary St Edmunds Trustees**

## **There's no day like a snow day**

Woo Hoo!! I'm sure this was the sound heard in many homes across Kent on Monday morning when we woke to discover an even thicker blanket of snow outside, the news that most schools were closed, warnings of more snow to come, continuous advice to stay at home, there were no trains or buses and sadly it seemed an endless list of accidents and road closures. After much deliberating, a struggle with my conscience, my fear of driving in the snow and endless pleas from the kids we decided like so many across the country to have a cheeky 'snow day'.

I decided to forget trying to get the car off of the drive, forget worrying about that journey from Platts Heath to Maidstone where I would have driven with my legs shaking every time I had to tap on the brake and my shoulders would have been up warming ears, forget keeping an careful watch for nervous, anxious drivers other than myself, forget worrying about paying out £200 excess if my car had a prang, forget worrying about how much more snow will fall before home time and forget worrying if I will make it back safely: in fact just forget about trying to have a normal day on this unexpected day, because even though we knew it was coming it was still unexpected!

So, after finally making the decision to have a 'snow day', my first thoughts were to make good use of this unexpected day off. I could get my paperwork into order, maybe clear out a few cupboards, get the kids to tidy their bedrooms...properly this time...then splat, no I wasn't hit with a snowball, I was hit with a reality check. How often do we get snow, I mean proper snow, snow that's just right for making snowmen, just right for sledging and snow ball fights? Not very often. And how often do we get the chance or the time to be spontaneous with our kids and just do something out of the ordinary? Not very often. I know Monday's weather may have been inconvenient and our reaction to it pathetic but we decided to have a snow day so a snow day is what we were going to have in the truest sense.

### **Plan for the day:-**

1. Make arrangements to meet up with friends, there's more fun in large numbers.
2. Make a huge pot of tasty home made soup and consume a large bowlful.
3. Dress up in layers of clothes making oneself look like a 5 year old which will make you feel like a 5 year old and thus behave like a five year old and obviously add to the fun.
4. Find large snow covered space (not difficult) and build snow men, make snow angels, have friendly snow ball fights, get wet and cold until you can't feel your fingers and toes and are barely breathing, then head home for lunch.
5. Get out of wet clothes and leave in a heap on the floor, find more ridiculous clothes to wear, eat lunch then head out in search of the biggest snow covered hill you can possibly find that is suitable for sledging, (again, not difficult).

6. Cart the kids up and down the now gigantic hill (you so stupidly found) until whole body aches, collapse in the snow in the pretence of making snow angels so that you can have a rest, once wet and cold and you can't feel your fingers and toes etc, head home.
7. Take off wet clothes and add to the mountain from earlier. Warm up the remainder of that tasty soup you so cleverly & wisely made in the morning.
8. Hot bath. No matter how much you think you've thawed out, you'll discover just how cold your body actually is, aaahhhh that's better...relax.
9. Bedtime, pass out as you hit the pillow...oh oh.. before you do this, pray for all of the snow to be cleared by morning because you really must get to work and there's absolutely no way your body could possibly handle another day like this, as much fun as it was!

Some of the kids from Platts Heath enjoying their 'snow day'



Ashley Pager, Oliver Harper, Jack Naismith, Molly Reeves, Tana Higerty, Jessie Reeves, Rachel Boswell, Jemma Boswell, Shani Higerty, Ben Harper, James Tucker and Mike Harper. And of course Mr Snow Man

**Angie McElvanney**

## **The London Marathon and Leukaemia**

I (Adam Jenkins) live with my wife and daughter in the Old White Swan at Platts Heath. Following the diagnosis of leukaemia of both a close friend and a relative last year, I have undertaken to run the London Marathon this year in aid of Leukaemia Care, a charity that supports those with leukaemia and their families.

Having seen first hand what a devastating effect it can have on families I am keen to promote their work and to support them.

Further information about the charity is available at [www.leukaemiacare.org.uk](http://www.leukaemiacare.org.uk) and if anyone would like to donate they can do it online at [www.justgiving.com/adamjenkins](http://www.justgiving.com/adamjenkins) or by contacting me by e-mail ([adammrjenkins@hotmail.com](mailto:adammrjenkins@hotmail.com)) or phone (07980 864133).

As I had not done any running for about 15 years up until Christmas it is a real challenge for me. I am in training now and it really helps motivate me every time I get another donation to do a bit more. I tend to do my longer runs on Sundays, so you may well see me out and about in the area.

**Adam Jenkins**

### **Lenham Wanderers Football Club**

#### Centenary Club Lottery

The results of the January 'Centenary Club' draw were as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> Prize - No. 12 Winner - Jim Henderson  
2<sup>nd</sup> Prize - No. 146 Winner - Tom Sams  
3<sup>rd</sup> Prize - No. 60 Winner - Paul Fairman

If you would like to join our 'Centenary Club' and have a chance of winning a cash prize each month, please contact either Bill Taylor on 01622 858724 or Roy Dayes on 01622 850203. Cost to enter is £1 per month or £10 for full 12-month membership (2 free months!). Entry is for over 18s only.

**Kevin Bragg**  
**LWFC Youth Secretary**

## Link Word Puzzle - Answers at the back (don't look first!)

I hope you enjoyed last month's link word. Here is another  
to rack your brains – Paul Neaves

The answer to number 1 has been filled in – can you solve the rest?

	<b>Word 1</b>	<b>Word 2</b>	<b>Word 3</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1	Party	Centre	Beer	<b>Garden</b>
2	Bear	Expert	Eye	
3	Attention	Wing	Life	
4	Knife	Witch	Shop	
5	Sandwich	Switch	Room	
6	Forces	Guard	One	
7	Happy	Never	Fairy-Tale	
8	Marital	Large	Time	
9	Cast	Flat	Lung	
10	Bay	Gold	Fig	
11	Front	Bean	Gun	
12	Heavy	Stamp	Bound	
13	Threat	Talk	Done	
14	Breaker	Pick	Dry	
15	Half	Tag	War	
16	Fore	Sake	Nick	

## **The March Night Sky**

The Sun is in the constellation of Aquarius at the start of the month, and moves into Pisces on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Now here is good news for everyone after a long cold winter, the Spring Equinox occurs on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March, when the Sun crosses the celestial equator from south to north, and British Summer Time begins on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March, when clocks should go forward one hour.

Full Moon occurs on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March, and New Moon on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March, and should be visible in the western sky after sunset.

Throughout March, Mercury is rising only minutes before the Sun, and is at superior conjunction (almost directly behind the Sun). So again we will not be able to see this planet.

I am afraid that Venus is coming to the end of its splendid appearance as the 'Evening Star'. At the beginning of the month it is high in the western sky at sunset, but every night it appears a little lower, and sets a little earlier.

As I reported last month, both Mars and Jupiter will not be easily visible until after the summer. I will return to Mars at the end of this article.

Saturn is in opposition to the Sun on 8<sup>th</sup> March, and is ideal for viewing throughout the month. Relative to the stars, it is moving very slowly north-westwards in the constellation of Leo. Through a telescope its rings should be clearly visible, together with many of its moons, the largest and brightest of which is Titan.

Now back to Mars. In last January's article I mentioned that Nasa's Reconnaissance Orbiter had spotted deposits of Carbonate, which is formed in neutral or alkaline water, which counters the theory that the water on Mars was at one time acidic. Now scientists are reporting that life could exist on Mars due to salts, which stop water from turning into ice. Despite very low temperatures, perchlorates in the soil which act as antifreeze, suggest that there could be liquid water below the surface, increasing the chances of life.

**John Maunder**

## **Bulky Refuse Collections (Weekend Freighter Service)**

Maidstone Borough Council has now issued the timetable for this service up to 12<sup>th</sup> April 2009. Please find below the dates of when the weekend freighter service stops near your home during this period:

### **Grafty Green**

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April      07:45 – 08:45 -: Church Rd - Junction Headcorn Rd

### **Platts Heath**

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March      07:45 – 08:45 -: Green Lane

### **Ulcombe**

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March      07:45 – 08:30 -: Lodge Gardens (cul-de-sac)

### **Lenham**

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April:      09:00 – 10:30 -: Lenham Heath Rd - Boughton Rd

## **Malherbe Monthly Magazine**

This magazine can now be viewed on the Internet via the Boughton Malherbe Parish Council Web Site. As well as the current edition, all back issues for 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 can be viewed. You even get the front cover in colour!!!

This web site also hosts all the minutes of Parish Council Meetings and give details of up-coming events in the Village Hall. The below link will get you there:

[www.boughtonmalherbepc.kentparishes.gov.uk](http://www.boughtonmalherbepc.kentparishes.gov.uk)

## **Music Notes - March**

### **The Voices of Classic FM come to Maidstone!!**

If you ever listen to Classic FM, you may have heard of Harry Christopher's world famous choir, The Sixteen who sing at famous concert halls worldwide make CDs and were the starring performers in a four part television series about sacred music over Christmas. In England, they are quite simply "The Voices of Classic FM". Maidstone Choral Union's new Music Director, Martin Hindmarsh, has persuaded these fantastic singers to be part of the next MCU concert, Bach's St John Passion.

The St John Passion is a hauntingly beautiful and moving work that tells the story of Christ's suffering and death over the events of Good Friday as told in the gospel of John. The soloists sing the parts of Jesus, the Evangelist (John) and other individuals in the story. The choir sings the part of the crowd witnessing these events and joining in with their cries for blood. The choir also sings, at various points through the story, some of the most beautiful "chorales" or short pieces that bring home the meaning of the events. For a Christian, this music makes a very moving meditation for Easter.

Maidstone Choral Union is a well established choir, performing four major concerts a year at Mote Hall, a very comfortable venue at the Leisure Centre. It brings high quality music to Maidstone. I strongly recommend you come to listen on March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7.30.p.m. Tickets are available from the Ticket Secretary 01622 726193, from Mote Hall on 0845 155 2277 or from Sharon Music shop, 65 High Street, Maidstone.

## **The Month's Good Cause**

### **Christian Blind Mission (CBM)**

Although from time to time we have featured charities for the blind in our monthly slot, it is six years since we wrote about CBM, a non-denominational, broad-based Christian charity which provides medical help to people who are blind or at risk of blindness in the poorest areas of the world. Their commitment is to "the poorest of the poor", and today the difficulty involved with taking sight to blind people can be just as great as it was when CMB was founded over 70 years ago. In 2002 we told about their work in Sudan, a country buffeted by civil war, chronic political instability, adverse weather conditions and extreme poverty, where life has been made even more difficult by famine and disease. The work there continues, and currently they are appealing for assistance for their work with their partners in the refugee camps in The Congo, where the widespread violence has left thousands at risk of life-long

disability. Another example of their work is provided by one of their workers who is a surgeon who spends two weeks of every month in his hospital in Blackpool, but the rest of his time as one of only two surgeons serving seven million people in the North of Malawi. The CBM workers believe that “the joy and satisfaction of the work – knowing that many people have received sight again and a new quality of life – far outweighs the risks involved”.

*CBM is a registered charity no. 1058162. You can make your contribution to their work by including them in your prayers and by sending donations to CBM UK, Vision House, 78/8 Oakington Business Park, Dry Drayton Rd., Cambridge, CB24 3DQ. Further information is available on website [www.cbmuk.org.uk](http://www.cbmuk.org.uk)*

**Brian Hardy**

If you would like to advertise in Malherbe Monthly and reach the whole of Boughton Malherbe, Grafty Green, Liverton Street and Platts Heath, the monthly costs are:

$\frac{1}{8}$ page	£3.00
$\frac{1}{4}$	£5.00
$\frac{1}{2}$	£10.00
Complete page	£20.00

Phone 01622 858937 or  
Email [mf.hitchins@virgin.net](mailto:mf.hitchins@virgin.net)

## Answers to the Quiz and Missing Word Puzzle

	<b>Word 1</b>	<b>Word 2</b>	<b>Word 3</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1	Party	Centre	Beer	Garden
2	Bear	Expert	Eye	Witness
3	Attention	Wing	Life	Span
4	Knife	Witch	Shop	Craft
5	Sandwich	Switch	Room	Board
6	Forces	Guard	One	Armed
7	Happy	Never	Fairy-Tale	Ending
8	Marital	Large	Time	Extra
9	Cast	Flat	Lung	Iron
10	Bay	Gold	Fig	Leaf
11	Front	Bean	Gun	Runner
12	Heavy	Stamp	Bound	Duty
13	Threat	Talk	Done	Idle
14	Breaker	Pick	Dry	Ice
15	Half	Tag	War	Price
16	Fore	Sake	Nick	Name

	<b>Find the missing word?</b>
1	James Nesbitt, Actor who went from Cold Feet to Murphy's Law
2	Louis Theroux, Documentary Maker
3	The Comets, Bill Haley's backing group
4	Cool Hard Luck, Classic Paul Newman film
5	The Moody Blues, Group that had a hit with Go Now
6	Play Misty For Me, Thriller with Clint East as a DJ
7	Monty Don, TV Gardening expert
8	The Hunt for Red October, Film with Sean Connery
9	Prince Caspian, Title character in the latest Chronicles of Narnia
10	Mull of Kintyre, No 1 single for Wings

***The Len Valley Benefice***  
***Lenham & Boughton Malherbe; Harrietsham & Ulcombe***  
**Sunday/Main Services – March 2009**

**1st March 1st Sunday of Lent**

8am Lenham BCP Holy Communion  
9.30am Harrietsham Family Service  
9.30am Boughton Malherbe Holy Communion  
11.00am Lenham Holy Communion  
11.15am Ulcombe Family Service

**8th March 2nd Sunday of Lent**

8am Lenham BCP Holy Communion  
9.30am Harrietsham Holy Communion  
9.30am Boughton Malherbe Family Service  
11.00am Lenham Family Service  
11.15am Ulcombe Holy Communion  
7pm Holy Cross Bearsted Taize Service

**15th March 3rd Sunday of Lent**

8am Lenham BCP Holy Communion  
9.30am Harrietsham Holy Communion  
9.30am Boughton Malherbe BCP Holy Communion  
11.00am Lenham Holy Communion  
11.15am Ulcombe Holy Communion  
6.30pm St. Nicholas Boughton Choral Evensong

**22nd March Mothering Sunday**

9.30am Harrietsham Holy Communion  
9.30am Boughton Malherbe Holy Communion  
11.00am Lenham Holy Communion  
11.15am Ulcombe Holy Communion

**29th March 5th Sunday of Lent**

8am Lenham BCP Holy Communion  
10.00am Lenham Holy Communion  
6.30pm St. John the Baptist Harrietsham Informal Service

**St Peter's Catholic Church, Bearsted**

*Button Lane, off Cavendish Way, Ashford Road, ME15 8NJ.*

Mgr Timothy Galligan 736100

Web: [www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk](http://www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk)

**4 April - Palm Sunday Vigil**

**6.00pm** Saturday Vigil Mass with Blessing of Palms

**5 April - Palm Sunday**

**10.30am** Mass with Procession and Blessing of Palms

**9 April - Maundy Thursday**

**8.00pm** Mass of the Lord's Supper

**10 April - Good Friday**

**11.00am** Way of the Cross

*Children especially welcome*

**3.00pm** Solemn Celebration of the Lord's  
Passion and Veneration of the Cross

**11 April - Easter Vigil**

**8.30pm** The Easter Vigil Service

**12 April - Easter Sunday Morning**

**10.30am** Easter Sunday Mass

**The Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Harrietsham**

Rectory Lane, off East Street

Mgr Timothy Galligan 736100

Web: [www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk](http://www.catholic-bearsted.org.uk)

**5 April - Palm Sunday**

**8.45am** Mass with Blessing of Palms

**10 April - Good Friday**

**12 Noon** Way of the Cross

**12 April - Easter Sunday Morning**

**8.45am** Easter Sunday Mass

## Christian Message – March 2009

I have been gardening with my chainsaw again. Perhaps gardening is the wrong word – more like hacking and clearing.

We have plans to grow some fruit trees and soft fruit. And as we want to have a garden to sit in and enjoy as well as be productive, we are planning flower borders, shrub beds, and so on. But we can't start planting yet.

When we moved here 4 months ago, the garden was quite neglected; the house had been empty for 2 years. So large areas were head-high in weeds, brambles and Japanese knotweed. The hedges were all 20 feet high and everything was overgrown; it was all quite dark and depressing. We couldn't plant anything because there was no space and there was no sunlight to help anything grow.

In order for new growth to come, the old and dead wood and the weeds have to be dealt with. So I've been clearing, preparing the garden for new plants. It's very hard work and just now it looks terrible. There is mess everywhere, piles of weeds and brambles and dead old trees and branches. It takes the eyes of faith to believe that it will ever look like a garden. But, amazingly, now there's some light, snowdrops and aconites have popped up.

All this, of course, is so much like our own lives. While we're not looking, things creep in, fill up the space and take over. And of course it feels comfortable, because we've got used to it as it's slowly grown. Maybe it's attitudes to other people - strangers, neighbours, relatives - that we've allowed to become rotten. Maybe it's attitudes to our money and possessions that we have allowed to possess us. Maybe it's anger, bitterness and unforgiveness that have grown and taken over. Maybe it's our attitudes to morality and ethics that we've allowed to decay until they're worthless.

In the recent bestselling novel "The Shack", an angry and grieving man has an encounter with God. At one point he finds himself in a garden, pulling up plants and preparing the ground for new ones. It's hard and painful work. But it turns out that the garden is an image of his own self and the work allows him to forgive and be renewed.

As we begin Lent, leading up to Easter, why not spend some time weeding and clearing the garden of your own life? How about joining a Lent group, a START group or reading "The Shack"? You could begin with an Ash Wednesday Service on the 25<sup>th</sup> February: Wednesday at 9.30am in St Mary's, Lenham or 7.30pm at St John's, Harrietsham. Feel free to contact me for further details.

May God bless you all.

The Shack by William P Young, Hodder & Stoughton

**Dick Venn, Lenham Vicarage; 858195 dickvenn@gmail.com**

## **WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

Service prepared by the women of  
Papua New Guinea.

Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

St. Mary's Church, Lenham 10.30am.

All Saints' Church, Ulcombe 7.00pm.

All Welcome.      Refreshments