

The Lenham Focus

APRIL 2024 issue

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Easter Eggs by Nick White



LENHAM

FILM CLUB

Spring & Summer 2024

April : Friday 12th

The Sting

May: Friday 10th

One Life

June: Friday 14th

The Great Escaper

July: Friday 12th

Can You Ever Forgive Me

August: Friday 9th

Wicked Little Letters

September: Friday 13th

Green Book

Admission: adults £5, under 16s £2

Cash only, on the door

Doors open 19:00, performance begins 19:30

Lenham Community Centre
Groom Way, Lenham ME17 2QT



@LenhamFilmClub



www.lenhamfilmclub.org



lenhamfilmclub@gmail.com

Editorial

We are rightly proud here in Lenham of our village, the facilities, activities, the location and the opportunities to be an integral part of the community. But it all takes time and effort.

With the onset of a substantial number of new homes as the village expands, it might be thought that getting volunteers to keep the wheels turning should be getting easier, but this does not seem to be the case. We found at the end of last year that it was only at the 11th hour that the annual Christmas lights and celebrations were saved. Our amazing Lenham Meadows Trust struggles to get helpers, the Parish Council has vacancies for councillors and

we, the *FOCUS*, are always looking for help to distribute your monthly magazine.

So if you can help – even if it's just a couple of hours now and then – please consider offering your services. *FOCUS* needs distributors, the Lenham Meadows Trust article seeks 'clean-up' helpers for monthly maintenance (1st Sunday of each month) of our local green spaces, and the Food Station needs volunteers – see inside for more details.

If YOU can offer your time, expertise or involvement, let me know and I'll pass your details on to the organisation or society that interests you.

David Jackson
Editor

FOCUS is also online at
www.lenhamparish.org.uk
(Click on 'Lenham Focus')



Village Spring Clean Join the litter-pickers on **Saturday 6 April** (10am-midday) to make our village look its best. Meet outside the **Red Lion**. Equipment provided. For more details ring the parish council on **01622 829034**.

We welcome your input and comments please email me at editorialsf@outlook.com

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By 1st of the preceding month to editorialsf@outlook.com or by phone/text on **07714 311008**. Photos of the village and local events are welcome.

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Row the Pacific



You might recall that back in April 2023 we covered the challenge facing 4 rowers embarking on a 2,800 mile journey across the Pacific Ocean, all in aid of the charity MIND.

This inaugural 'World's Toughest Row' began on 12 June 2023 with 14 teams participating from around the world. 'Pacific Discovery' set off from the historic harbour of Monterey, followed the path of many adventurers and explorers of yesteryear, and rowed the whole 2,800 miles to the finish line in

Hanalei Bay on the stunning island of Kauai. A hard-to-beat backdrop for what is the most incredible, once-in-a-lifetime adventure.

The team spent two years, almost every day, preparing themselves - mentally and physically - for this monumental feat. They trained, ate, slept, and repeated - rowing, getting to know each other, and pouring over tasks in their master plan spreadsheet!

They rowed non-stop for 34 days: 2 hours on the oars and 2 hours off. They consumed 850,000 calories and experienced equipment failures, tough weather patterns and the perils of almost capsizing; but had a front seat with a 360' view of 34 sunrises, sunsets and moonbows. An experience that will last them a lifetime.

Want to hear more? Come along to the Lenham Tithe barn and hear from the team in person.



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Tithe Barn Lenham



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Sharon Prior 07776 401405

The Sting



**LENHAM
FILM CLUB**

at Lenham Community Centre, Groom Way

Friday April 12th

**Performance begins 19.30,
doors open 19.00**

Running time 2 hrs 9 mins

We're opening our spring and summer programme with a winner, selected as a favourite in this season's audience vote. Come along to see **The Sting** (PG 1973) and you're in for an evening of sheer pleasure and laughter, even if you've seen it before. It's not often you can say that about a film, especially one set in the Chicago of the 1930s when the Great Depression was raging, but this one, starring Robert Redford and Paul Newman together with its unforgettable Scott Joplin ragtime score, most certainly qualifies. Robert Redford plays Johnny Hooker, a small-time crook who mistakenly tries to dupe big-time crime

boss Doyle Lonnegan (played by Robert Shaw). When Lonnegan retaliates, Hooker asks for help from the master of the long con, Henry Gondorff (played by Paul Newman). The stakes are high and chaos ensues. You'll be gripped right up to the brilliant end of this fabulous film, which won 7 Oscars including Best Picture. Directed by George Roy Hill.

Our May performance is another winner. In **One Life** (2023) Anthony Hopkins brilliantly plays British stockbroker Nicholas Winton looking back as his younger self saves hundreds of Jewish children from the occupying Nazi forces.

Please get in touch for more information or to join our mailing list.

Admission: Members £4, Non-members £5, under 16 £2, Under 5 free.



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Lenham Festival

Before writing about this year's event we would like to pay tribute to our friend **Jill Hatcher** who was involved with our group for so many years. Jill was a pleasure to be around. Organised and professional, diligent and hard working and always with that wicked laugh, she had a wonderful sense of humour. We shall miss her enthusiasm and dedication to our group and to all the organisations she assisted. Our thoughts are with Jill's family.

Lenham Festival 2024

After a gap of a few years, the team is pleased to announce a 2024 festival will take place on Saturday 1st June from 11am to 5pm at Lenham Community centre.

The day will be in the form of a showcasing of groups, organisations and talent within our community in all its varied forms. It's a wonderful event to celebrate our village, its ethos, heritage and community spirit which we are all so proud of in these difficult times.

Many organisations have already come forward to take part along with performers. We look forward to hearing from others who wish to contribute.

Please contact 01622 859412 or 07891901831; Lenham Festival

The advertisement features a close-up of a modern, polished chrome Quooker Flex faucet set against a white tiled wall. The faucet is sleek and curved, with a single-lever handle. To the right of the faucet, a small, round, textured object, possibly a sponge or a piece of fruit, sits on the countertop. The background is a dark grey diagonal split, with the Quooker logo in red on the left and the Inspired Interiors logo and promotional text on the right.

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Lenham Events Calendar

We thought it would be a good idea to have a central events calendar so that when organisations are planning special events, they can check the calendar to see if there are any other events on that day that would clash.

Please let us know of any special events that you have planned so that we can add them to the calendar.

We have added an events calendar to the Community Centre website. To check on events click on Calendar, then at the top of the page change Main Hall to Lenham Events and choose the month that you are interested in.



The Community Centre website address is: **www.lenhamcommunitycentre.org.uk**

You can contact me, Julia Allen, by email **julia.allen@cjaconsulting.co.uk** or phone **01622 859775** or **0776 5472074** or Carol at the Community Centre (Monday to Friday 9am – 1pm) email **bookings@lenhamcommunitycentre.org.uk** or phone **01622 853800**.

Please note that this is just for special events not regular meetings.

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A view from across the pond

by Diane Bonfonte, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada



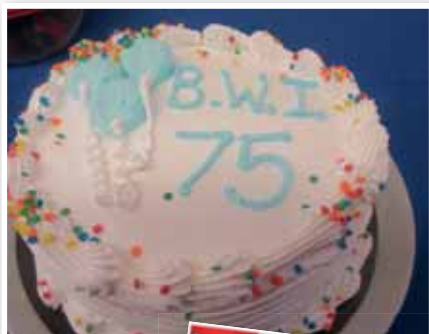
In April, I will “officially” become a member of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario. The WI movement was co-founded in 1897 by Canadian, Adelaide Hunter Hoodless (Feb. 27, 1858 - Feb. 26, 1910). About 40km from Waterloo, is her homestead in St. George (National Historic Site/museum).

Born in Ontario, Madge Watt immigrated to England in 1913. She introduced the concepts and practices of Canada's WI movement. WI's U.K. inaugural meeting was held on September 16, 1915, in Llanfairpwll, Wales.

WI began in rural areas with its cornerstone directive to teach 'domestic science' and its importance. Along with WI, Adelaide's tireless campaign for proper household management resulted in this topic added to schools' curriculum. Her commitment and perseverance are extraordinary standards to uphold. WI's 'resolutions' are a testament of results from decades of challenging and influencing attitudes, laws, ideals and definitions throughout society. Canadian 'resolutions' are posted on WI's national website.

On February 8th, I was warmly welcomed at the Bloomingdale (Ontario) Branch's 75th Anniversary celebration. For the occasion, everyone was asked to bring a tea cup/saucer (most of which were made in the U.K.) to briefly tell its story and what WI membership has meant. “Where do I start with decades of cherished memories?” one member exclaimed and others shared wonderful, heartfelt reminiscences about mothers and sisters as WI and 4-H leaders.

WI's beloved and valued 'sisterhood' carries on making connections in all corners of Canada, especially illuminating pathways for women. With dedication and leadership, this women's organisation continues to strive for the betterment of society around the world -adding to WI's legacy. Adelaide would be proud!





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Lenham Community Centre

20th anniversary celebration

Your invitation from Julia Allen, vice Chair, Lenham Community Centre

Lenham Community Centre is celebrating its 20th Anniversary so we are holding a celebratory evening with the return of the very popular Ian Gallagher who will swing us through the event with Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Matt Munro, Sammy Davis Junior and Michael Bublé.

We are aware that times are difficult with the high cost of living so have kept the price as low as we can at £14 per ticket. Do please bring your own drinks and nibbles. Tickets are available from the Community Centre 9am – 1pm, Kent Loves or the Lenham Parish Office. (Details on the poster on the next page).

A Potted History

The village had outgrown the Old Lenham Parish Hall and whatever renovations we did to the amenities such as the kitchen, toilets and heating they were never going to be adequate - plus it wasn't large enough.

So, the seed was sown to build a new community centre within walking distance of the village.

First, we had to find the land, which was quite a hurdle, and then of course purchase it. As you will probably all know our community centre was built on land off the Old Ashford Road along with the "new" GP

surgery and low-cost housing; the road was named Groom Way.

Fund-raising started in earnest and we then put in applications for Lottery and other funding; twice we were turned down by the Lottery but thankfully, after hiring Tom Roberts at a cost of £10,000, our third application was successful.

Outline planning permission was applied for and granted in 1999; full planning permission granted in 2002 and building started later that year. The keys were officially handed over from the builders in January 2004.

Some of the original Management Committee are still on board; Nick Osborne, Ian George and me, Julia Allen. Some are no longer with us; Harry Appleton, Tony Robinson and our Secretary Margaret Mitchell. Roy Gill and Nigel Watson have both moved away from the village. But most importantly without the tenacity and determination from Nick Osborne (Chairman) it would never have happened, so thank you Nick.

We would also like to thank the Parish Council and many others who helped us along the way. Sorry, we can't name you all here.



Lenham
Community Centre

20th Anniversary Celebration
Dance

Saturday, 20th April 2024

With Ian Gallagher
Classic Kings of Swing hits

Tickets £14 -available from

Lenham Community Centre, 9 -1 Mon - Fri

Kent Loves and Lenham Parish Office

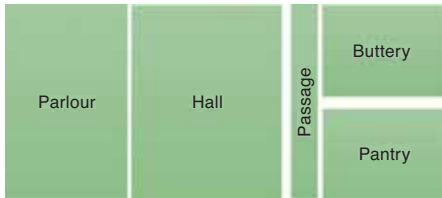
7.30 pm Start

Bring your own food and drinks

A Story about 'Puritan Troublemakers and President F.D Roosevelt' (part 2)



From Henny Shotter, Heritage Lenham



In the last *Focus*, we heard about Thomas and Helchea Reader, the 'troublesome' sons of the wealthy yeoman Paul Reader. He died in 1597 and left his estate to his wife and subsequently, once the children came of age, to Patience (1578 – ?) Thomas (1580 - 1632), Helchea (1583 - 1637), Sara (1585 - 1616), Margaret (1588 - 1610) and Mary (1593 – ?).

Each of the girls were to inherit £40, which was a small fortune then; Thomas would inherit the Hall House and land in Lenham; and Helchea a house in Boughton Aluph. The hall was in the centre, with the parlour on one side and the buttery and the pantry on the other. Above the parlour and, at the 'lower end' (the buttery and pantry), were two chambers. There were also outbuildings; a bread house, a milk house, a kitchen, barn and barnyard. It is likely that the floor of the house was clay.

The archive holds a document from 1594 in which two men were accused of entering Paul Reader's property and taking up the clay floor. Theft of building materials seems to have a long tradition! However, the hall was a rather prestigious place, with even a painted cloth as a wall hanging.

It contained a cupboard, a long table, two benches, four chairs, five joined stools and twelve cushions. The parlour, which was part of the family's private quarters, was similarly furnished but without wall-hangings.



A "joined" stool gets its name from the fact that proper "joints" were used in making the stool. (image: W&A)

The chambers upstairs had comfortable beds, with feather bedding and bolsters. One of the beds had a trundle bed (a bed under the bed) which traditionally was used for a servant to attend to the master in the night when needed. The family had 23 sheets, ten tablecloths and 30 table napkins, which are all indicators of a very comfortable lifestyle. On the farm were three cows, thirteen ewes, a ram, four lambs, six hens and four chickens. At the time when the inventory was taken, wheat was growing on nine acres.

The Reader family owned goods to the value of £222.

According to information in the book by Michael Zell "Industry in the Countryside", the Reader family was in the top 10% of society in terms of the value of their household goods. However, by 1664 there was only one person with the surname Reader living in Lenham and she was too poor to have to pay Hearth Tax. So what happened? (More in the next *Focus*).

LENHAM AND LIME



An illustrated Talk by **Vanya Sharp & Henny Shoter** at Lenham Community Centre
Thursday 25 April 7.30 pm
(after a sort AGM)
Entrance £4, Members Free



New fastest-growing sport from USA – Swat-Ball

Straight from Florida, a mix of fly-swatting and darts, comes the latest *craze* sweeping the States and on its way here. Invented as recently as very early April last year, the game involves hitting ('swatting') jelly-balls with the fly-swat paddle onto an enlarged darts board. The jelly bursts on impact and the score is recorded from the jelly-mark left behind. First to 180 wins. A specially designed clean-up device ('J-ball cloth') is used to wipe the board ready for the next swat. Head of Swat-Ball USA says: 'It's a great way of releasing anger without damaging your health – any fool can do it'.

Here in the UK, there's talk of a Swat-Ball organisation ('ASBO'). Watch out for details.



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†Internet is provided by a third-party supplier. The included "Superfast Internet" package refers to download speeds of up to 30Mbps and a download limit of 100GB per month. You can upgrade for an additional charge per month. The supplier's "Ultimate" package includes download speeds of up to 30Mbps and unlimited data (subject to acceptable use terms). Installation charges have an RRP of £149 at the time of print.

^£500 credit will be placed on the owner's Loyalty Card at parks with food and beverage facilities. £500 credit will be placed on owner's account at parks without food and beverage facilities. General terms: Subject to further terms and conditions available on request. Offers are valid on selected models. Minimum purchase price applies. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. We reserve the right to withdraw this offer at any time without notice. A holiday home cannot be used as your only or main residence.



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Lenham

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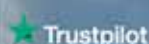
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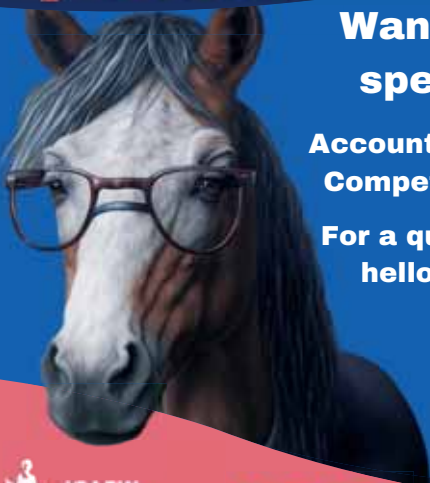


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Pilgrims Way Art Exhibition and Craft Fair

Save the dates: - May 17th - May 27th 2024. Craft event 24th – 26th May 2024

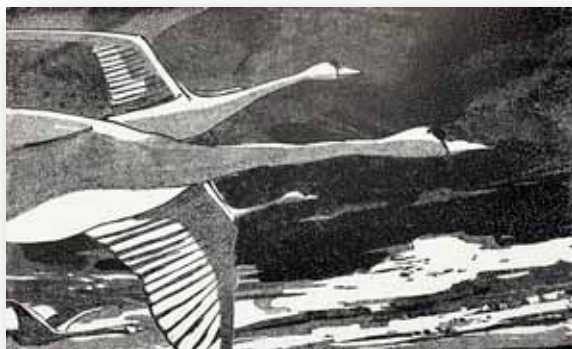
More details will follow in the May edition of *FOCUS*. Meanwhile, here's a taste of some of the art you will see at this year's exhibition.



Paul Fowler



Billy Showell



Nigel Davison



Richard Friend



Mary McFadden



David Gisby



Cherry Tewfik



Gavin Roweth

You will see regular updates on all the parish council's activities in the *Focus*, our website and social media.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Every year Lenham Parish Council organises an Annual Parish Meeting. This is not the usual parish council meeting, which deals specifically with the "business" of the village, it is more an opportunity to hear what many of the groups in the village are doing, to catch up with them and update on what is happening around us in general.

This year that event will take place on Friday 19 April at the Lenham Community Centre. The doors will open at 7pm and the meeting will start at 7:30pm. Local groups will be present with information about their services and opportunities for activities.

There will be an opportunity to ask questions of all the parish councillors in an informal setting and to share your views on what you would like to see the parish council focus on, if you feel there is something which needs addressing. We also hope to be in a position to discuss the outcome of the recent review of the Maidstone Local Plan.

Unlike our usual meetings there will also be refreshments! We don't have those at our monthly gatherings but for the Annual Parish Meeting we do. So why not come along, and let us know what your concerns are and tell us where you think we are doing OK?

BUILDING WORKS, OLD HAM LANE ROAD CLOSURE – MARCH TO JULY

The company working on behalf of Countryside Homes, the building company developing the 136 new homes off Old Ham Lane (strategic site 5 in the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan), will begin work during the last week of March.

This means Old Ham Lane will be closed to all traffic at the junction with Ham Lane, from 25 March until around 22 July to allow the road to be widened and services laid.

Access to William Pit Field will be maintained during this time. Access to the properties at the top end of Old Ham Lane will be via the junction with Sandway Road.

It may be possible to allow access through Old Ham Lane during this period if the works reach a point where the road surface can be reinstated. This will entirely depend on progress and cannot be guaranteed.

Once the works are complete there will be a revised and wider access to the development site west of Old Ham Lane and a new, temporary junction to this road just north of the railway bridge.

Jill Hatcher

The parish council was deeply saddened to learn that Jill Hatcher passed away in January. Jill was a stalwart of the Lenham community and had worked tirelessly on the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan. Our deepest condolences go to her family.

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ARUNDEL CASTLE TULIP FESTIVAL



Friday 26th April 2024

Join us for the day visiting Arundel Castle for it's annual Tulip Festival. The festival is regarded as one of the top tulip displays in Europe and it set against the breathtaking backdrop of the Castle.

A sea of colour as the festival showcases over 120 different named tulips planted by the Castle's award winning head gardener and his team.

Over 100,000 tulips create a stunning display of colour.

Entrance includes the Castle, Keep & Gardens

£53 per person

Pick up points: 08.30 Carrs Yard, 08.45 Dog & Bear Lenham,
09.00 The Rose Bearsted

BOOKING FORM—ARUNDEL CASTLE TULIPS— 26th April 2024

Name:..... Tel:

Address:.....

.....

Email:..... No. of seats:.....@ £53 each

Pick up point:.....



Recipe of the Month

Mrs Sutherland's Devonshire Apple Cake

Ingredients:

170 g (6oz) self-raising flour

85g (3oz) unsalted butter

85g (3oz) caster sugar

1 ½ pudding basinful of chopped apple – small pieces

1 egg, beaten

Method:

Preheat the oven to 190C/375F/Gas 5 and butter a shallow baking tin.

Sift the flour into a basin and rub in the butter, then add the sugar. Stir in the chopped apple and finally the beaten egg. The mixture should be fairly stiff.

Place in a shallow baking tin, sprinkle the top with caster sugar and bake for about



¾ hour. Remove from the oven and let it cool slightly. If desired, dust with icing sugar before serving.

This is a lovely pudding for a Sunday lunch, served with cream or ice cream. If using as a cake, then allow to cool before cutting. It should keep for several days in an airtight tin.

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Book Review

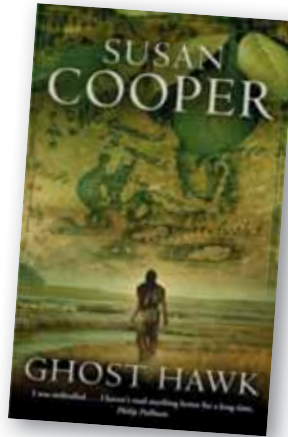
From the Lenham Library

The author I am showcasing this month is Susan Cooper. She's an award-winning writer recognised by the American Library Association for her contribution to teen fiction. Her books mix fantasy and fiction, often incorporating the supernatural.

The author moved from Britain to the USA and settled in the Marshfield area of Massachusetts.

It was here that her book *Ghost Hawk* was researched and written. It tells the story of the short life and coming of age of a young member of the Wampanoag tribe. In the middle of Winter Little Hawk is sent out into the wilderness where he will spend three months entirely alone. He can take only a bow and a quiver full of arrows and his mystical tomahawk. His father has given him a metal knife, traded with furs, from the white settlers across the great sea.

If the young boy survives three moons by himself, he will be a man. When Little Hawk returns to his village, he finds it decimated by death and disease brought by the people of the new Plymouth Colony.



This is a beautifully written book describing the relationship between the native people and the land; and the respect for nature and its bounty. It's a story of suffering and survival and the close friendship of an English boy and an Indian. It is a portrait of life in 17th century colonial America where religious bigotry and intolerance were rife and interactions with the native population led to acts of betrayal in the acquisition of

land. The book has a twist in the middle which I was not expecting but it only encouraged me to read on.

The author has been praised for her contribution to children's fiction. Teenagers place a lot of value on relationships, culture and the environment and understanding the genres that appeal to teens is critical to engage them when their lives are increasingly digital and when reading has to compete with games and social media.

Lenham library welcomes young people. It is a social place where all can meet to use our computers, e books and our growing collection of books suitable for teens and young adults.

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Dates For The Diary

20 April

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17 - 27 May

Pilgrims Way Artist Summer Art Exhibition

2 June

Friends of St Mary's Safari Lunch

27 July - Henry V

28 July - Present Laughter - Matinee

Open Air Productions by Changeling Theatre

18 August

Three Musketeers - Parkwood Theatre

30 August - 1 September

Green Room Concerts - Details to Follow

21 September

Barn Dance with Friends of St Mary's

13 October

Apple Pressing Fun Day - Lenham Meadows Trust

15 - 17 November

Mid Winter Market by Orchids Occasions



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Lenham Community Centre – Regular Clubs/Classes/Societies – April 2024

ACTIVITY	WHEN HELD	TIME	CONTACT No
Abundant Energy Tai Chi	Weekly Monday	0930-1030	07985 001782
Abundant Energy Qigong	Weekly Monday	1045-1145	07985 001782
Baby Ballet	Friday	0930-1045	07866 316056
Country Ways Knitting	2nd Monday	1330-1630	01622 858658
Country Ways Quilting	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday	1330-1630	01233 879507
Country Ways Rugmaking	2nd & last Wednesday	0900-1300	07784 892160
Craft & Chat	2 nd Wednesday	1330-1730	01622 851885
Craft & Chat	Last Saturday	1330-1730	01622 851885
Feathers Badminton	Weekly Monday	2000-2200	07866 151370
Gardening Society	3rd Thursday	1845-2200	01622 430649
Hatha Yoga	Weekly Monday	1815-1945	07850 355918
Kent School of Bridge	Weekly Thursday	1330-1730	01622 891964
LenARA Bowling	Weekly Tuesday	1330-1700	01622 858439
LenARA Line Dancing	Weekly Wednesday	1845-2115	01622 859725
LenARA Members	4 th Wednesday	1230-1700	01622 851763
LenARA Petanque	Thurs if weather allows	0900-1300	01622 858439
LenARA Zumba Gold	Weekly Wednesday	0900-1030	01622 850228
Lenham Art Group	Weekly Thursday	1000-1300	01622 858238
Lenham Badminton	Weekly Tuesday	2000-2200	01622 858561
Lenham Ballet School	Monday/Tuesday	1700-2030	01622 850329
Lenham Ballet School	Thursday	1630-2100	01622 850329
Lenham Ballet School	Weekly Saturday	0900-1530	01622 850329
Lenham Heritage	4 th Thursday	1900-2130	01622 850228
Lenham Toddlers Pre-school	Weekly Tuesday	0930-1130	01622 858919
Lenham WI	2 nd Thursday	1845-2200	01622 858658
Make & Shake (Pre-school)	Weekly Wednesday	1030-1300	07894 160906
Parish Council	1 st Wednesday	1930-2230	01622 829034
Parish Council F & G P	3rd Wednesday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Parish Council Planning	1 st Monday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Pathways Church	1st & 3rd Sunday	0830-1330	07914 156685
Sing & Shake (Pre-school)	Weekly Monday	0930-1300	07894 160906
Telisa Tai Chi	Weekly Wednesday	1730-1830	07734 108683
Zumba with Rosie	Weekly Tuesday	1830-1930	07809 490982

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Wednesday 29th May 2024



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BOOKING FORM—WALMER CASTLE—WEDS 29th MAY

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Lenham Gardening Society From Margaret Baines

The next meeting of the society is on Thursday April 18th at 7.30pm in the Community Centre.

Our speaker this month will be **Clive Nuttman** with his presentation on '*Plants Have Feelings Too*'. The competition is for 3 tulips and/or 3 pieces of shortbread.

Future events are:

Saturday 11th May to Wednesday 15th May
– Annual Holiday to Scarborough

Tuesday 25th June – Trip to Walmer Castle

Thursday 18th July – Pimms and Strawberries (members only)

Tuesday 10th September – Trip to Kew Gardens

Thursday 21st November – AGM followed by Cheese and Wine. (members only)

All are welcome to the meetings except for July and November which are for members only. Members pay £1 entrance with non-members paying £1.50. Annual subscription is £7 per person. Tea/coffee and biscuits are available in the interval and a raffle held before the evenings close.

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Adult Ticket Price: £35.00

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Lenham Meadows Trust

Countryside and community

By the time you are reading this we will be half way through spring and hopefully it has stopped raining every day! Along with all the other joys of spring, this is the time when hedgehogs start to emerge from hibernation, although being nocturnal they are not always easy to spot. Lots of information can be found online with www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk being a great source.

You can help them by leaving out water and food which will help supplement their diet of beetles, slugs, caterpillars etc. One of the best things we can do is to hedgehog-proof our gardens and open spaces, leaving areas 'wild' or untidy, creating gaps in fencing (they can cover large distances on their night-time wanders) and reducing other obstacles.

We are fortunate in Lenham to have Kevin, who has been rescuing hedgehogs for several years, nursing them back to health until they are able to be released. He liaises with Medway Hedgehog Rescue and the British Hedgehog Preservation Society but funds the cost for food and medication himself. If you find an injured hedgehog, would like to help Kevin or donate food or newspapers, then please contact him on **07932 383552**.

Volunteers

As a volunteer organisation we are always looking for more people to help out. That could be on the committee, helping at events, writing articles for our website, applying for grants and funding, writing

management plans or coming along and lending a hand at one of our sites, there is always a lot to do!

Our upcoming work

The work managing our sites is year round, and with that in mind we have started a regular volunteer morning on the first Sunday of each month from 10am-12 noon at both Glebe Pond and Jubilee Garden, all are welcome and we appreciate all the help we get. We will be holding other volunteer events throughout the year; these are announced via email (sign up on our website www.lenhammeadowstrust.org) and social media.



Sunny Jim, currently being nursed back to health by committee member Val.

Dates for diary

1st Sunday of each month:

10am-12am, Volunteer morning
Glebe Pond & Jubilee Garden

23rd May:

AGM - Dog & Bear Function room.
Speaker Dan Tuson from Natural England

13th October:

Apple Pressing Event
Tithe Barn

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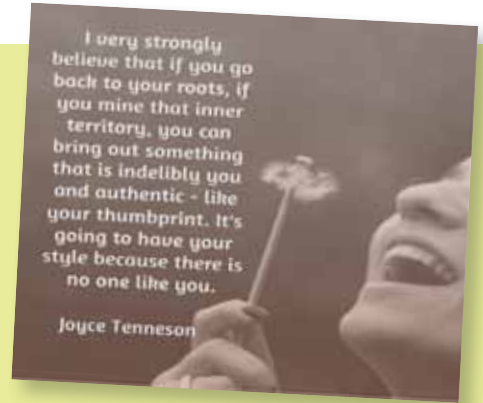
From Vladimir Barkanov

We live under constant influence from external and internal factors, and some of those influencing forces can/do become our roots. The very first “force” that influences us is our family, with its traditions, habits and values. Then we move to the community. This field becomes wider and could be more nourishing. The next step will be the culture and traditions of our nation, or country.

These are three primary grounds where we root ourselves by default. But then there are higher and wider rooting grounds, which we choose ourselves, that have the power to transcend our primary roots. One of them will be ideals (do not confuse with ideology). We can root ourselves in ideals that we learn from religion, positive humanistic research, or both; ideals that are universally accepted as positive. Having such roots can help us to grow further than with “old” roots, transcend our original boundaries and improve not only our well-being but also improve lives of others.

But why is having strong roots important for our well-being? The benefits of being rooted could be learned from observing the trees. It is remarkable how many similarities there are between us and trees when we talk about rooting. So, what do roots do for a tree, and us?

Roots support life. Principles, values and a



way of life we inherit from different places help us to adapt to life in the area we live in. The deeper our roots and the bigger our “rooting ground” the more will we flourish.

Roots ensure growth. Strong, healthy roots ensure continuous development, which will bring more satisfaction and happiness to our lives.

Deep roots ensure our resilience in the face of challenging circumstances. They become the foundation for self-discovery. This is an aspect where we differ from trees. A tree is a tree. Oak cannot change into Maple over time. But a person born in a traditional, multigenerational manual worker family can become a composer. But that will happen not “despite” the roots, but because of them. Deep roots reduce confusion, which helps to focus the mind and supports self-discovery. And one more thing – If our roots are strong and deep, even if we fall, we can still be able to grow in the right direction.

So, what are your roots? How strong are they? May you need to consider re-potting? Until the next time....

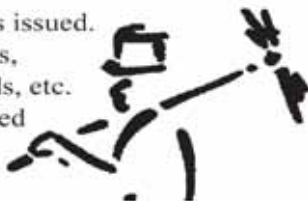


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April Anniversaries



90th anniversary

Percy Shaw patented the 'Cat's Eye' road safety device.

75th anniversary



On 4 April 1949 it is 75 years since the creation of NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, where 12 nations came together to sign the treaty.

NATO was established to create a force to counter Soviet armies stationed in central and eastern Europe after World War II. The current member states of NATO are Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, UK and USA.

NATO is a military organisation, which consists of a complete system of commands for possible wartime use.

It has a Military Committee, with representatives of the military chiefs of staff of the member states. Funding generally is not used for the procurement of military equipment, which is provided by the member states – though the NATO airborne Early Warning Force, a fleet of radar-bearing aircraft designed to protect against a surprise low-flying attack, was funded jointly.

50th anniversary

6 April 1974 is the 50th anniversary of ABBA's Eurovision Song Contest victory.



Held in Brighton, Swedish pop sensation ABBA performed 'Waterloo' which became a worldwide hit. The song not only put the group on a path to fame but it's often been heralded as the greatest in Eurovision history.

5th anniversary

Former UKIP leader Nigel Farage launched the Brexit Party on 12 April 2019.



Faversham Literary Festival

Feedback from the February events

You may remember that FOCUS offered some free tickets to a couple of the Festival events, exclusively for our readers.

One lucky winner, Vicky Coulling, won entry to the Rob Biddulph children's event for her and daughter Annabelle.

Vicky wrote to FOCUS saying: 'Just wanted to say a big thank you for our tickets to the Faversham literary festival. We had a great time and my daughter thoroughly enjoyed it.'

Here are Annabelle's drawings she produced on the day.



Nature Watch

From Darren Hammond

Feed them and they will come (and maybe bring their babies with them).

As we enter into spring, the birds will be singing up a storm and the dawn chorus is truly a beautiful sound. Take some time to get an early morning walk and just drink in those wonderful melodies as they call out to each other to either establish their territories or search for a mate.

Once they've made their choices and then started nesting, birds will be needing a lot more in the way of food. Not only to help the female to prepare for laying and then looking after their young but to feed the young birds themselves. If you want to install a feeder of some description make sure that it is in a place where the birds will feel safe and secure; this means not too close to any bushes or trees (a few yards away so they can see any threat or flee if needed). If you've never put out any food before, things like sunflower seed hearts, split peanuts and even bits of apple will be welcome. You may eventually get some uncommon visitors like those pictured.



The Common Redpoll

This little bird is easily mistaken for perhaps a sparrow or dunnock from the back but once it turns around that very distinctive red patch on its head gives it away. Whilst the name implies it's common, that's more to distinguish it from the lesser redpoll. They love sunflower hearts.

The Greenfinch

The Greenfinch was once a more common bird but alas several years ago they were struck down by a virus that ran through the population. They also love sunflower hearts and the male is very green with a brighter green stripe on





its wing. The females are more a faded green with similar wing markings.

The Goldcrest

The Goldcrest is a very elusive visitor and will more likely be seen on the outskirts of a village near wooded areas. They will eat some small seeds but you will more likely see them flitting through trees picking off morsels from the branches and twigs. Britain's smallest bird weighs as much as a 20p piece, is very quick and does not stay still for long.

The Yellowhammer

The Yellowhammer is another bird that is more likely to be seen on the outskirts of a village and then only if it's surrounded by farmers' fields.



They tend to be ground feeders and are very skittish when people are near. Some can be a very vivid yellow while others have yellow heads but have a more brownish body. Not common in the garden but can be seen in the fields.

Siskins

Siskins are quite small birds - about blue tit size - and are very different in appearance. The male (bottom left) is a very, very bright yellow with a very pronounced black cap.

The females (bottom right) tend to be less bright but I think much more beautiful.

They are not all yellow; mainly white with some stripes and a slight cap on their heads. They love sunflower hearts (as most birds do).



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Our Lenham Food Station

Our village food station, located in St Mary's Church, was set up in December 2022 by Lenham local Sharon Prior and borough councillors Janetta and Tom Sams. The food station's available to anyone who needs a helping hand; it's very well-used and provides support to our community by freeing up family budgets, which is particularly necessary with the rising cost-of-living. There's a similar initiative in Harrietsham at St John the Baptist Church, funded from the local County Councillor contribution and funding from a Harrietsham Charity, supported by volunteers and the local community, in a similar way to Lenham.

Support along the way

Many local groups and organisations have been very generous with assistance to set up and keep the food station going. St Mary's Church provides the space and the electricity for the fridge, which was purchased by grant funding from a recycling charity. The Lenham-based Hatch charity, which supports local initiatives, has donated substantial funding; Lenham Primary School has made huge donations of food and toiletries by raising money on non-uniform days and at their Harvest Festival; The Holigans have donated money from their performance; Kent County Councillor Shellina Prendergast has helped to fund the food station by assigning county budget to it. We thank them all for their support.

How does it work?

Our caring community does a fabulous job in supporting the food station, with locals donating food and toiletries on a regular basis. A group of dedicated volunteers work to keep the food station

running smoothly. The M & S/BP garage and Harrietsham Co-op donate their surplus food every day. Lenham Co-op has a food station collection point in store where shoppers can buy an extra item with their shopping and then pop it into the drop-off box. The food is collected, taken to St Mary's, arranged and checked on a daily basis by the rota of volunteers. Tom & Janetta supplement the donations with regular shopping for staple items. We're so grateful for all of the support which enables this necessary community endeavour to continue.

A wonderful new grant

The food station has just been awarded a substantial additional grant by Southern Co-op, as part of their latest initiative working with over 60 local community food stations right across the region. Southern Co-op members have helped to make a difference by buying their regular groceries and then scanning their Southern Co-op membership cards – the Co-op has donated 2p to food station partners for each membership card scan. This grant has seen a fabulous £1,200 bolster our Lenham food station coffers. The funding will allow additional supplies to be purchased and will ensure that the food station keeps running for longer. We'd like to thank Southern Co-op for this grant, Lenham Co-op for nominating our food station to receive support and Southern Co-op members for swiping their membership cards.

Can you help?

Do you have some time to help with collection and delivery of supplies to the food station? Extra volunteers would help to share the load and would maybe allow weekend collections as currently we are only making collections Monday-Friday. Please get in touch if you think that you have time to spare. **Contact Tom and Janetta Sams on 07891 901831 or sams.uplands@gmail.com**



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Lenham WI

The latest news from Chris Godden



At our meeting in February we welcomed **Alison Williamson** from the *West Kent Federation Green Team*. She told us about the many ways we could support the work of the Climate Coalition by improving awareness of the problems that we face both locally and globally.

Climate Change is the long term shift in weather patterns and temperatures which is caused by us and not by nature. It has a huge impact on farming and food with increased flooding which is a risk not just to humans but also to plant life, wildlife and ocean life. 520,000 properties in Great Britain are at risk now from coastal flooding and erosion. Heat waves also bring higher drought risks. In 2023 4,507 people in Britain died as a direct result of extreme heat.

More information can be found on **energysavingtrust.org.uk**, **recyclenow.com** and **terracycle.com**. This is important and we must do what we can to help maintain a sustainable world for our grandchildren and great grand children. We owe them that.

Also in February some of our members went to see the Strictly “*Behind the Seams Tour*” to gain an in-depth understanding of the meticulous craftsmanship that goes into creating performance costumes, including Ballroom & Latin dresses, featured on “Strictly Come Dancing”.

We learnt more about the dresses and costumes, the real stars of the show, how long it takes to make the dresses, the process from initial design, from award winning costume designer Vicky Gill, to the addition of the final rhinestones.



Last month, Adam Taylor came to give us a very interesting talk about the Islands of the Medway Estuary with the abandoned forts, a shipwreck and the wildness and beauty of the area.



This month we welcome Henny Shotter from Lenham Heritage. Looking forward to that. There is always something interesting going on at the WI.

We meet at Lenham Community Centre on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm.
If you'd like to join us please contact me on 01622 858658 or email rrgodden@btinternet.com

The Arts Society Egerton

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We meet at Egerton Millennium Hall on
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Countryways Quilters and Stitchers

From Pamela Gillard

Goodness, we already have a ¼ of the year under our belts! If it's going too fast for you, we can slow it down. In the summer we do slow stitching, out in the garden when it's not too hot (small pieces of hand stitching).

But while we are inside with the large tables to lay out our quilts, we are working on quilt blocks that can grow to a quilt or just become a cushion cover or decoration for any number of bag projects. In March we started our star quilt and should be finishing the block on April 2nd.

April 16th should see the introduction to manhole covers - an oriental circular design in traditional oriental patterns.

It can be the start of a free flow quilt or a round cushion. Or even could be used as an applique for the back of a quilted jacket or waistcoat.

Come and learn more about our stitching group and spend some quiet time stitching. Learn new skills and share old ones.



We meet on the first and third Tuesdays of every month except December and would love to see you. We meet usually in the Appleton room in the Lenham Community Centre from 1:30 to 4:30. If you'd like information on our group or a copy of our 2024 programme please contact me, Pamela Gillard, at 01233 877453 or email moonbeamspinner@gmail.com

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Two Maidstone events this April:-

1. Meet a giant dinosaur at new 'Magical Beasts' Sculpture Trail

Everyone is invited to come along to the launch of a new 'Magical Beasts' Sculpture Trail on Wednesday 3 April at 10.30am in Maidstone Town Centre where they will get the chance to meet a giant T-Rex, a baby Iguanodon and other dinosaurs.

At the launch, Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) will be unveiling the brand new sculpture trail featuring six bespoke artworks. The fun and quirky designs will include two baby Iguanodon dinosaurs, two cheeky gremlin characters and two baby elephants.

The permanent sculpture trail will start from Brenchley Gardens, continue along the riverside to the Archbishops' Palace and on to the Lockmeadow Entertainment Complex. Each sculpture will include a QR code giving more details on various aspects of Maidstone's fascinating heritage from geology to local industries and the town's market.

The free, family-friendly fun will start in Brenchley Gardens from 10.30am, when the dinosaurs will go on a walkabout with their handlers. They can be found in the park or around the town centre throughout the morning. The entertainment will continue at Lockmeadow with another chance for people to see the dinosaurs and take part in more interactive fun including a lesson in 'how to train your dinosaur' at 1.30pm and 2.30pm!

The new sculptures have all been designed and created by father and son



artist team, Gary and Thomas Thrussell, who also created the Iguanodon sculpture at Maidstone East Station, which links with the new Magical Beasts trail.

This project, *Magical Beasts Sculpture Trail*, received funding from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which brings together local residents to help improve areas in their community whilst boosting their own wellbeing.

2. Everyone is welcome to join Maidstone's Medieval Fayre on 6 April

MBC is delighted to once again host the **Medieval Fayre this Easter**. The free-family-fun day will be held in the town centre's beautiful Brenchley Gardens and takes place on Saturday 6 April from 11am – 4pm.

The MBC Medieval Fayre will see a party of re-enactors bringing traditional crafts and skills to life along with talks and demonstrations including spinning,

woodworking and calligraphy, as well as a barber surgeon and a blacksmith working at his forge.

Visitors can find out about medieval crime and punishment or learn more about childhood toys and games, then meet the beautiful owls and birds of prey from Kent Owl Academy, before undertaking some Knight and Princess training!

MBC Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Arts, Cllr Claudine Russell said: "The Medieval Fayre is a fabulous day out for all the family with so much for people of all ages to see and do."

The Medieval Fayre is one of the first of many free events being held by MBC in 2024. The Council is planning a huge variety of entertainment including the Maidstone Summer Series when the town centre will see a host of performers, entertainers and musicians take to the streets.

Find out more about all there is to see and do in the County Town by visiting the Maidstone website:

www.visitmaidstone.com



Len Valley Benefice

Everybody is welcome

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches. *Matthew 13:31-32*

Wednesday 3 April

9.30am Lenham: Holy Communion (BCP)

Sunday 7 April

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Holy Communion

Sunday 14 April

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Holy Communion

Sunday 21 April

8.00am Lenham: Holy Communion (BCP)

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Morning Worship

Sunday 28 April

10.30am Benefice Holy Communion at All Saints, Ulcombe

'I am the Light of the World'

Check notice boards nearer the time

Christian Message

Hallelujah, Christ is risen!

From Pamela Cuerden

When you read this, it will be somewhere around 1st April, or April Fool's Day when traditionally people play little, but hopefully not unkind, tricks on each other up to midday.

More importantly, this year 1st April will also be Easter Monday so celebration will be in the air, the taste of chocolate eggs may well be on our lips and Spring flowers will be brightening up the village, reminding us about new life and the Good News of Jesus' resurrection. Thoughts of Lent will be becoming a distant memory.

But as I write this, Lent is in full swing. I am half way through a Lent course; last night friends quizzed me about what I might have given up or taken on for the month and this morning I attended a Lenten Reflection gathering at Canterbury Cathedral.

One of the Lent course exercises was a practice, devised by Ignatius of Loyola in the 16th century, to read a passage from the Bible and then re-read it again taking on the character of one of the people in the story. One of the Lenten reflection exercises was *Lectio Divina*, a practice which began as far back as the 6th Century, where we read a passage and then slowly re-read it again, each time thinking of a poignant word or verse on which we could meditate, ponder and pray, enjoying being in the presence of God.

These are well known methods of helping us to look at, and dig deeper, into a Bible story in order to have a personal encounter

with God and discover new insights. The Easter Day Gospel reading this year is Mark 16 verses 1-8, where we read about the miraculous rising of our Lord from the grave and his appearance to Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, at the tomb, after they found that the stone had been rolled away.

It is a beautiful but well-known passage, which you may have heard about many times before so I would urge you to read it and then read it again, applying one of these techniques. I can't predict what you will experience but pray that it brings you joy and a little nearer to our Lord who sent his only son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, to free the world from sin and offer us all eternal life.

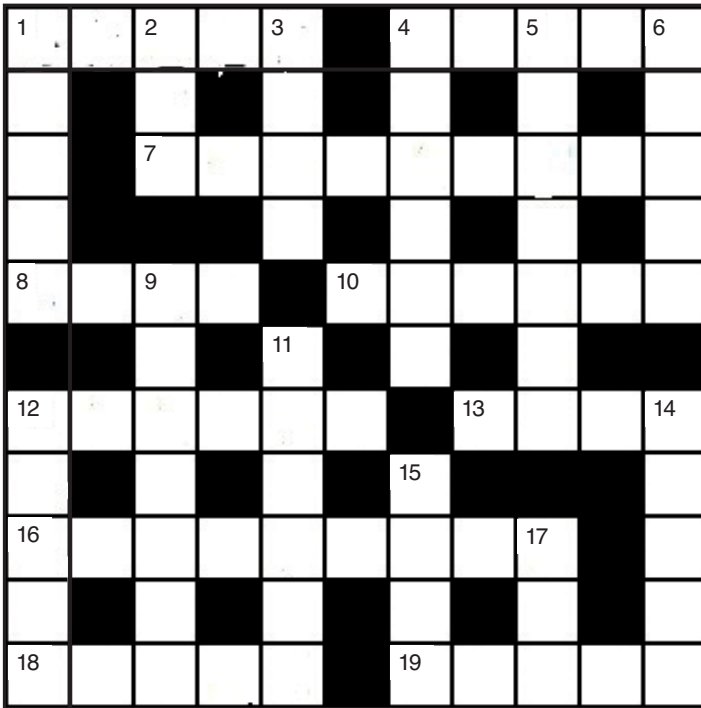
Happy Easter everyone!

Worship Leader(s) needed

The Len Valley churches (Boughton Malherbe, Harrietsham, Lenham, Ulcombe) are looking for people with musical talent who can support, develop and lead the worship in one, or all of our churches. If you can play an appropriate instrument, have gentle leadership skills and are open to being involved in Christian worship, please contact us for more details. This role involves some financial reward. We can also support training, e.g. young keyboard players who want to learn to play the organ. **Please call 01622 850280 or email churchoffice@lvb.org.uk**

Focus PRIZE Crossword April 2024

The February 2024 winner was Rob Maunder of Lenham – well done!



Answers for March 2024
Focus Crossword



Across clues

1. Chalk face maybe. (5)
4. Red fleshy crests on some fowl. (5)
7. Australian jumpers! (9)
8. Peepers (sl.) (4)
10. Calm (6)
12. Getting older. (6)
13. Another name for a chill or fever. (4)
16. Mysterious. (9)
18. Spiritual being. (5)
19. Dice shapes. (5)

Down clues

1. An illegal occurrence. (5)
2. Fluid produce by a squid. (3)
3. Provide money for a cause. (4)
4. The hole in a volcano. (6)
5. Where a boat is tied up. (7)
6. Black-eyed A flower. (5)
9. Sundown time. (7)
11. A variety of living creature. (6)
12. Stadium. (5)
14. The opposite of odds. (5)
15. Relating to the ear. (4)
17. Another word for a taxi. (3)

A £10 voucher, donated by your crossword compiler, will go to the first correctly completed crossword picked from your entries. Please complete the box below and hand your entries into the Lenham Parish Council offices at 1a High Street Lenham or into the Lenham library by **no later than 21 April** where they'll be placed in an envelope. The winner will be notified direct and announced in a future issue of *Focus*.

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