



Benenden
Magazine
September 2017

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Editorial



Your Benenden Magazine has no particular political penchant. We recognise that there is a diversity of views among our readers, just as there is among the editorial staff. Sometimes, however, it is simply not possible to get away from politics on our pages. No, let me rephrase that. Sometimes we are criticised for not being MORE political - or at least not recognizing the political context that is the backdrop to some of our pieces.

Last month our correspondent, Tracy Claridge, wrote about the wines of Israel, and in particular those from a vineyard owned by the firm he works for. The article was seen by Hazel Strouts who has been involved with the charity Action Around Bethlehem Children With Disability and who took considerable exception to the lack of a political setting for the piece. You can read her letter to the magazine on page 27 along with a brief reply from last month's editor.

They say, rather grandly perhaps, that journalism is the first draft of history and with that in mind we have, very gingerly, put a toe in the water of the Brexit debate on page 30. The magazine takes no particular stance over Britain's withdrawal from the European Union, but we felt it reasonable and, hopefully, enlightening to report on what some of our local farming community feel about their future outside the Common Agricultural Policy. And of course since it's farming that has moulded our Wealden landscape over the centuries, the fate of our farmers could well influence the look of the countryside that we all hold so dear.

As ever, your views on what is in or should be in the magazine are welcome - do please contribute to the letters page. And as always we welcome ideas, and writers, for future features.

Kent Barker, Co-Editor

The Benenden Magazine is published monthly as a joint venture by Benenden Parish Council and St George's Parochial Church Council. It is distributed free to all residents of the parish. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the publishers. Responsibility for accuracy of information rests with contributors and advertisers. Neither the publishers nor the editors shall be held responsible for or endorse any opinions, products or services printed in the magazine or directory.

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Advertising orders or queries to: advertising.benendenmag@gmail.com.

Distribution queries to: dd.rhill@btinternet.com.

Postal address: c/o Community Office, Benenden Village Hall, Benenden, TN17 4DY 01580 240371

Village Calendar

September

Saturday 2	Churchyard Working Party, St George's, Benenden, 9.30-12noon	
Saturday 2	Village Activity and Fun Day, The Green, 3pm	p.9
Saturday 2	Quiz Night, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Sunday 3	Village Panto Auditions, Benenden Village Hall, 2pm	p.9
Sunday 3	Alex Coutts, Organ Recital, St George's Church, 6pm	p.9
Thursday 7	Iden Green and Benenden WI, Visit to Tenterden Light Railway and Lunch	p.25
Friday 8	Woodland Wide Games, Iden Green Congregational Church, 7pm	
Saturday 9	Friends of Kent Churches, Ride + Stride	p.15
Sunday 10	Education Sunday, St George's Church, 10am	p.15
Thursday 14	Benenden Women's Club, Visit to Godinton House and Gardens, 2.30pm	p.17
Sunday 17	Messy Church, St George's Church, 4-6pm	p.15
Monday 18	Planning Committee and Transportation Meeting, Iden Green Pavilion, 6.30pm	
Monday 18	Parish Council Meeting, Iden Green Pavilion, 7.30pm	
Tuesday 19	Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm	p.23
Tuesday 19	Iden Green and Benenden WI, American Road Trip, Iden Green Pavilion, 2pm	p.25
Sunday 24	Benenden Pre-School 50th Birthday Tea Party, Benenden Village Hall, 10am	p.9
Tuesday 26	Merry and Bright, Memorial Hall, 3pm	
Friday 29	The Wines of Domain Road, New Zealand, Memorial Hall, 7pm	p.33

October

Sunday 8	St George's Harvest Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm	p.13
Wednesday 11	Workshop for Small Businesses, Blue Hen Flowers, Benenden, 9.30am	p.21
Friday 13	The Music Scholars of Benenden School, St George's Church, 7.30pm	p.21
Saturday 21	Hospice in the Weald Concert and Supper, Benenden Village Hall, 7pm	p.15

Benenden Youth Club/Streetcruizer, age 11+

Tuesdays at Benenden Village Hall, 6.30-8.30pm

Coffee Shop

Wednesdays in the Memorial Hall, 10-12noon

Cakes & Chaos: Cafe and Toddler Group

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

Refuse Lorry Collections

Saturday 9 September for Garden/Compostable Waste

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

Saturday 23 September for Domestic Waste

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

Parish Council



A few years ago the Borough initiated a campaign to look after the local environment. It was called “Love Where We Live”. Not a very charismatic phrase, but very appropriate for us here in Benenden.

So this autumn we are re-energising this campaign over a whole range of activities and are encouraging local people of all ages to join in to maintain and improve our local environment and the quality of our lives. We have professional experience in Terry Baldwin, our Parish Lengthsman but, looking around the village, I am conscious of much that needs doing. It is more than one person can do on his own. Autumn is the time for hedge cutting and tidying. We will be having our Autumn litter pick in October (provisionally set for Saturday 7 - but see next month’s magazine).

We will be using contractors for some of the more difficult major tasks, some of which are long overdue. We do however need people who can give a few hours of their time on occasional Saturdays to join us with secateurs and shears to help cut back and tidy up. As they say, “many hands make light work”. Do please contact me if you can help with this.

The Civic Amenity Vehicle (the Saturday dustcart) now visits us more frequently, coming to Benenden and Iden Green every two weeks. This was arranged by the Parish Council. We will be reviewing the success of the new timetable so please let me know if you have any comments or concerns on the new regime.

We have a new committee covering Community Affairs and Local Environment. There will be an initial set up meeting later in September, with its first operational meeting early in October. Again please let me or our clerk, Caroline Levett, know of any issues/items that you would like covered. Details will appear in this magazine, on the notice boards and on the Parish Council website.

Meanwhile the routine work of the Council continues. As we move into the autumn, we already have to start preparing our budget for next year.

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

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

Parish Council Meeting
Monday 18 September 2017,
Iden Green Pavilion, 7.30pm

**Planning and Transportation
Committee Meeting**
Monday 18 September 2017,
Iden Green Pavilion, 6.30pm
(new timing for a trial period)

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Just a Thought



The Visit

There were nine all together - five grandchildren this time, from two to ten years old, two mums (the dads were at work) and two grandparents - for a whole week!

Grandma had been a little concerned over the question of food, in particular how much to stock up? What to buy? Advice from her daughter had been, 'buy at least twice as much as you think and it might last until the middle of the week'. Then there was 'healthy eating' - would any salt or sugar be allowed at all, or would she have to sneak a pinch of salt in to the potatoes when no one was looking. At least there would be plenty of fruit and vegetables.

On reflection, at the end of their stay, it was not food but the delicate question of discipline that gave pause for thought. Parenting nowadays appeared to be rather different from when she was bringing up her family. Why was there so much discussion? At what point did tolerance give way to 'in my home we ...'?

One of the mothers was reviewing the week feeling a great sense of pleasure at seeing how the children all got on so well together. With pre-school looming it had been encouraging to see her boy engaging with a lively cousin and yet holding his own when necessary. The influence of cousins was variously good and less desirable. The days were full on from beginning to bedtime with quiet times seemingly few and far between. As for getting everyone together for an expedition - it was, indeed, like herding cats!

The eldest grandchild, a ten-year old boy, happily remembered the visits to the beach and the opportunities to ride the waves, the visit to a real castle, the chance to cook and to have some serious adult conversations with aunt and grandparents. He also appreciated the quiet of the early morning when he could escape into his favourite books before being required to organise or take responsibility for anyone else.

She fell asleep in the car before it reached the end of her grandparents' road but the littlest member of the party would have thought of all the excitement with so many children around. She had loved watching them and copying them but also going off on her own to explore in her own way. She would have remembered happily tearing up a colourful picture, enjoying the sound of the tearing paper and the mound of small pieces she made, although not the response she got when she was found! Then there was the occasion when the bright red felt pen would not stay on the piece of paper she was colouring but kept sliding on to the table. Time to retreat and have a cuddle with grandma.

Mountains of washing; toys, pants, and pieces of Lego scattered throughout the house; kitchen items in the most unlikely of cupboards; all fade into insignificance as the grandparents agree it was a great family time.

Sue Fisher

Church Calendar

St George's Church

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

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

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

www.benendenchurch.org 850849 benendenchurch@gmail.com

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

Sunday 3 September	8am Communion	10am All-age Communion and Sunday School	5pm Choral Evensong 6pm Organ Recital
Sunday 10 September	8am 1662 Communion	10am Morning Worship (Education Sunday)	5pm Taize Service at Mission Church
Sunday 17 September	8am Communion	10am Sung Eucharist	4pm Messy Church
Sunday 24 September	8am Communion	10am Morning Worship	5pm Praise Service at Mission Church

Mission Church, Sandhurst

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

Every Tuesday 10am Communion

Iden Green Congregational Church

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

Sunday Services 10am Morning Worship 5.30pm Evening Worship

The Roman Catholic Chapel

Fr Barry Grant 713364 www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org

Masses 9am Sundays 7.30pm Holy Days

From the Parish Registers

Weddings 19 August Sophie Ashton and Jack Stileman
26 August Laura McNally and Edward Sherrington

Rector's Letter



Beauty of Creation

I trust that you managed to get a break from the normal routine over summer, and perhaps even managed a holiday away somewhere. We journeyed up to Scotland as we have done in the summer for the last forty years or so. The beauty of our country never ceases to amaze me. There are some bits that we whizz past quickly on the motorway having over 500 miles to cover. I'm sure along the way we miss some other beautiful scenery, but we leave one beautiful part of the country and arrive to relax in another beautiful part - around The Trossachs in Scotland.

Once again the scenery, and the wildlife, did not disappoint. Oh that we had our village ornithologist with us! We saw plenty of birds from robins to buzzards (fortunately I can tell the difference between them!), but we could have done with Charles to identify all the other many birds we saw. Being in Scotland we didn't see any grey squirrels but were pleased to see several red squirrels on the feeder outside our cottage. One small red squirrel kept returning again and again, distinctive by the coloured rings on his tail - natural, like a ring-tailed Lemur rather than rings actually attached to the squirrel!

Having got used to the red squirrels, we then had the delight of seeing not one, not two, but three Pine Martens playing around the same feeders outside the cottage ... and not just a glimpse, but for five or six minutes! We were very fortunate. What beautiful creatures.

But even they weren't the highlight of the holiday on the wildlife front. We went on many walks, three of them either started at or finished up at a remote farm near Balquhiddy. On each occasion we were there, we were blessed with seeing a white stag. Again, not just a glimpse of it, but simply standing and watching it for five minutes or more. A beautiful creature with a wonderful head of antlers - still looking velvety. How we managed to see all of this with our crazy dog with us I do not know! The stag certainly saw Barney but was completely unfazed by him.

The beauty of the wildlife we saw, and the beauty of the scenery, once again convinced me that creation cannot simply be the accidental coming together of certain elements in just the right temperature and pressure conditions with just the right amount of light - and hey presto ... life! I still believe in the process of evolution, and that being part of creation; but it all just being one big accident? No, it can't possibly be. And, if not an accident, then how - and more importantly why - did it all happen? Enjoy mulling that one over the next time you see any form of life - it's all beautiful. (Well, maybe not the midges!)

And speaking of beauty: thank you to all the folk who responded to my call for help in our beautiful churchyard. It was greatly appreciated.

Revd David Commander, Rector



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News and Events

Village Activity and Fun Day

Saturday 2 September, The Green, 3-6pm

Better be quick or you'll miss the chance to celebrate the end of the summer with an afternoon of free fun and entertainment for all the family. Enjoy a cream tea, or a glass of something chilled to accompany your chilli pot, and have a go splatting rats, beating the goalie and hooking ducks. There'll be face painting, bell ringing, pole lathing, plus the reversible bike to challenge your co-ordination, the bungee pull to challenge your strength, and wheelbarrow racing to challenge your endurance.

There will be the chance to see the two-seater microlight built by students at Benenden School, and the Streetcruizer will also be putting in an appearance. Make sure you get along and put in an appearance too.
Mark Glubb markglubb@hotmail.com

Benenden Players News

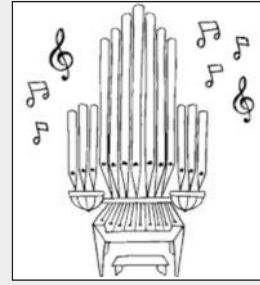
Sunday 3 September, Benenden Village Hall, 2-5pm

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

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

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

Nancy Tolhurst 07711 139218
nancy.tolhurst@btinternet.com



Alex Coutts

ORGAN RECITAL

Sunday 3 September 2017

St George's Church, Benenden

6pm

following Choral Evensong at 5pm

Benenden Pre-School's 50th Birthday Tea Party

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

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

The book and a presentation of all the photos and memories collected will be on display at our 50th Birthday Tea Party at the Village Hall from 10am-1pm on Sunday 24 September. Please come and join us, and share your photos and stories with us before 10 September. Please contact:

Laura Burles events@benendenpreschool.co.uk
Sarah Andrew 240492
sarahandrew6@gmail.com

St George's churchyard working party

Saturday 2 September, St George's, 9.30am

To build on the terrific efforts made last month, we would be grateful to have your help.

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Village Activity & Fun Day



Saturday

2 September 2017

3-6pm on The Green

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Students and School-Leavers

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

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

Latest date for applications 30 September.

Calling all Bridge Players

As the summer is coming to an end it is time to start thinking about playing Bridge. We cannot teach beginners but if you can play basic Acol and wish to improve, either of the following friendly clubs may be for you.

Friendly Bridge Chicago Bridge is played in the Mission Church, Back Road, Sandhurst, Monday afternoons from 2-5pm. The new year starts after an August break on Monday 4 September. For further information please contact:

Eve Willard 01797 253431 or

Anne Tylden-Wright 850281

Benenden Bridge Club A small and friendly club which plays Rubber Bridge on Thursday afternoons from 2-5pm in the Memorial Hall, Benenden. For further information please contact:

Lesley Attwood 243318 or

Anne Tylden-Wright 850281

St George's Church Harvest Lunch

Sunday 8 October, Benenden Village Hall,
12.30-3pm

The Harvest Lunch will follow the Harvest Festival Service which will start at 11am. The menu includes smoked salmon terrine, shepherd's pie with peas and carrots (vegetarian option available), fresh fruit pastries with cream. Tea, coffee & soft drinks are included, but wine & beer will be available to buy. Always a popular occasion, so buy your tickets early (adults £7, under 12s £3.50) from: Benenden's Community Shop, in Church or from Lesley Attwood 243318 lesley.attwood@sky.com

Everyone Welcome

9th annual Richard Beattie Davis musical event

Tuesday 12 September, Sandhurst, 3pm

Malcolm Binns' programme includes Chopin, Rachmaninov, Beethoven, Scarlatti and Schumann. The final 2017 recital will be on Wednesday 11 October at 3pm with Gil Jetley. Both in aid of Hospice in the Weald. Tickets by donation (minimum £16), in advance from Gillian Davis 01580 850384.

Meanwhile rain didn't dampen the enthusiasm for the sold out performance of the R.B. Davis Memorial Recital on 29 July. Daniel Grimwood had prepared a fantastic programme of unusual offerings and the constant rain added extra atmosphere! He started with some Irish music by Cogan and Field which lead us to Russia with specialties by Balakirev, Blumenfeld and Henselt. Daniel ended with Ravel, which he told us we were the first to hear in a public performance - what an honour that was! Finally there was a stunning encore by Glazunov. Tea was served in the garage with the able assistance of Maureen Sadler and Hamish and Cynthia Brown. It was the first time that we had held a 'Piano Recital/ Garage Party' and it was a great success thanks to everyone's generosity and understanding. We raised an amazing £850 for Hospice in the Weald, which is £200 more than last year.

Gillian Davis 850384



TWAM - any old tools?

TWAM stands for Tools with a Mission, and collects tools. This includes most tradesmens' tools including power tools, sewing machines, haberdashery, I.T. equipment and childrens' educational books. These are checked and refurbished by volunteers and sent to poor, mostly African countries. The charity trains youngsters in their use and gives them the tools. Your support will help to save youngsters from malnutrition, crime and prostitution.

TWAM is a registered charity and the local rep is Chris Parkinson, resident in Benenden, from whom information can be obtained and collection arranged.

Chris Parkinson 388402
cfgparkinson@tiscali.co.uk

ABF The Soldiers' Charity mailing list

Following the interest aroused by the Sounding Retreat by the Gurkha Band at Benenden School in July, should you want to be kept informed of future events on behalf of the charity, please contact:

Chris Parkinson 388402
cfgparkinson@tiscali.co.uk

St George's is looking for expertise to make a new altar frontal and chasuble

In April this year our Parochial Church Council (PCC) commissioned a report on our four oldest altar frontals. These are all from the late 19th century, and some may well have been made in the parish. The PCC has permitted one of our two green frontals and the purple frontal to be conserved and therefore kept in use. However it has been decided not to repair the red altar frontal as the cost of conservation is significantly higher. This is the altar frontal that is hung at Christmas and other 'festal' occasions. Instead the PCC was wondering if there is anyone in the parish who has the knowledge and needlework expertise to lead a team to make a replacement red altar frontal? Many of our later frontals were made in the parish. It is not envisaged this would be nearly as elaborate as the Victorian one, but neither would it be completely plain. We also need a new red chasuble whose pattern would follow that of the red altar frontal. If anyone is interested in either leading or helping with this project please contact one of our churchwardens in the first instance.

Julia Collard and Tracy Claridge, Churchwardens

Churchyard Working Party

St George's Church would like to thank those people who turned out for the Churchyard Working Party on 5 August. There were 16, more than for many years, half of whom are not members of our congregation. It was really good to see that the churchyard is appreciated by the village as a whole.

In addition to their regular work, the group created paths through the wild areas to the graves of men who had died on active service. You may have noticed the "War Graves" sign now attached to our noticeboard by the lych-gate.

Julia Collard and Tracy Claridge, Churchwardens

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

Saturday 9 September

A cycle ride, walk or even a drive for the less hardy around Kent churches - a chance to see inside them all, 'fight the flab' and help raise money for your local church by obtaining some sponsorship. A Win! Win! Win!

Every little helps - your sponsorship money is split equally between a church or chapel of your choice and the charity itself, Friends of Kent Churches, helping to save churches in Kent.

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

Interested? Please contact either of the following:

Carolyn Millen, Event Co-ordinator

01622 843383

carolyn.millen@virginmedia.com

www.friendsofkentchurches.co.uk

Alison Prall, Parish Event Organiser 240417

Education Sunday

Sunday 10 September, St George's Church, 10am

St George's Church invite all children, parents, staff and governors of Benenden Primary School to the main 10am service on Sunday 10 September to mark the start of the academic year. This will be an informal, non-Communion service. Our guest speaker will be Richard Dowling, the Apollos Trust worker based at Homewood School.

We also hope that the Molly Dancers will be dancing at the top of the Green following this service - they are camping on the Glebe this weekend.

Revd David Commander, Rector



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just have fun!

Revd David Commander, Rector
01580 240658 david@dc-uk.co.uk

**Contemporary
Worship**

Praise Service

**Sunday
24 September**

**Sandhurst
Mission Church
at 5pm**

Music concert in aid of Hospice in the Weald

Saturday 21 October, Benenden Village Hall, 7pm

The concert will include a rock choir, jazz music and classical music. Try to make up a table of eight and enjoy a great variety of music. Tickets £25 each to include a hot meal. Cash bar. For more information and tickets please contact:

Jenny Stevens, Hospice in the Weald Friends
Co-ordinator for Benenden and Sandhurst
07720 006244 jenny.tenterden@gmail.com



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Talking Shop

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It is simple to find Claire's bread at Benenden's. It is there, outside the office, round, wholemeal and white loaves, just waiting to be savoured - as long as you get there in time! Only the best natural ingredients go into making it and we, in Benenden's, along with many other good quality local outlets, are lucky to have a regular supply.

Claire has a fascinating story to tell. In a former life, she had a successful career in Lloyds Insurance and was well used to the London commute each day. Her heart was always elsewhere, however, and an opportunity presented itself to indulge her love of dough (the edible kind) when she took some time off from corporate life and trained as a chef at the Tante Marie Academy in Wokingham (owned by Gordon Ramsay). Her special talent for bread-making was soon recognised at the college, which encouraged Claire to buy a Portakabin and begin to bake bread which was regularly and rigorously tested. There followed a busy round of local farmers' markets three days a week coupled with work in London for four days, which made for a frenetic lifestyle. Then came the crossroads moment. On the way to the station one morning she met a friend who put her in touch with Frankie Franke who was about to open a new farm shop and café in Staplehurst. She was persuaded to come aboard as their baker and within a short time was so much in demand that she made the decision to give up her corporate career and indulge her passion full time, leaving behind a set of incredulous work colleagues. Does she have any regrets? Absolutely not. Bread making is her passion. All loaves are made personally by Claire although she does employ others to help distribute it. The proof of this devotion is in the exquisite product which she creates. Try it; you won't be disappointed!


Bev Beveridge

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For more information please call
Rev'd David or Helen Commander 01580 240658
or email david@dc-uk.co.uk
or helenjcommander@gmail.com





Sweet Pea Workshop at Blue Hen Flowers

**Saturday 7 October
10-12.30pm**

I'll provide all you need to grow stunning sweet peas next year.

We'll talk through best method of growing, you choose colours and type and sow into root trainers to take away.

Free flowing essential coffee and cake.

£20 a head

Please sign up in Benenden's Community Shop or email Sheila Hume
bluehenflowers@gmail.com

Benenden Women's Club

Taking a summer break, meetings resume in September with a visit to Godinton House and Gardens near Ashford. We are due there at 2.30pm and shall be departing Benenden at 1.45pm, in shared cars.

If you are not a member of the Club and would like to join us you would be most welcome. Please contact:

Janet Beattie 240973
benendenwomensclub@gmail.com



Collingwood Ingram

Benenden History

Collingwood Ingram of The Grange

On 30th October 1980 Collingwood Ingram of The Grange celebrated his 100th birthday. He had been a familiar figure in the village for 60 years, small and wiry with blue eyes, white hair, a powerful personality and great generosity.

Collingwood's grandfather founded the Illustrated London News in 1842. His father and brother Bruce devoted their lives to the paper, but Collingwood had other ideas. He loved the natural world and spent the first part of his life, until the end of World War I, as an ornithologist. His World War I diaries, *Wings over the Western Front*, illustrated with his sketches, were edited by Ernest Pollard and Hazel Strouts and published in 2014. Many of his Flying Corps colleagues were killed, but even the war could not prevent Captain Ingram from going into the French countryside whenever he had a moment to spare, sketching people, landscapes and birds.

In January 1919 he returned to England. In the autumn of the same year he and his family moved from Westgate-on-Sea to The Grange, which he bought, together with Frame and



Stream Farms, when the Hemsted Estate was broken up.

The following spring two old Japanese cherry trees in the Grange garden came into flower and Collingwood was captivated. Just six years later he was an authority on flowering cherries and known to the gardening world as Cherry Ingram. He saved some of the old varieties from extinction,

including the Great White Cherry Tai Haku. He also raised new cherry varieties and other plants now familiar in our gardens, including the Rosemary Benenden Blue. His classic work *Ornamental Cherries* was published in 1948.

Flowering cherries are central to the cultural history of Japan, and Collingwood's contribution to their survival has been recognised in a Japanese book of 2016 by Naoko Abe. The English translation of the title is *Collingwood Ingram: the English Saviour of Japan's Cherry*





left: Great White Cherry Tai Haku

opposite below and below left: pages from Collingwood's sketchbook, *Young Stonechats* and World War I graves, including that of his friend Gerald Manby Colegrave, 1917

below: South side of the Street, Penelope Cox, 1980



their role in Japanese militarism during World War II, and the evolution of a cloned cherry that's become the global symbol of modern Japan.' An English version of the book is due in 2019.

Collingwood wrote two memoirs, *In Search of Birds* and *Garden of Memories*, describing a lifetime of travel, study and collecting. Through 60 years he filled the Grange garden with plants from all over the world and with others he raised himself. Since he died in 1981, some of his plants have died, but many remain and the garden is still beautiful and fascinating - well worth a visit on an open day.

On his 100th birthday Collingwood was inundated with cards and telegrams, including those from the RSPB, British Trust for Ornithology, Kew Gardens, Christopher Lloyd of Great Dixter and the Barhams of Hole Park. There were also many cards from his friends in Benenden: an especially beautiful one was from the "South side of the Street" with an original painting by Penelope Cox, art mistress at Benenden School for many years.

We finish with his cherry signature.

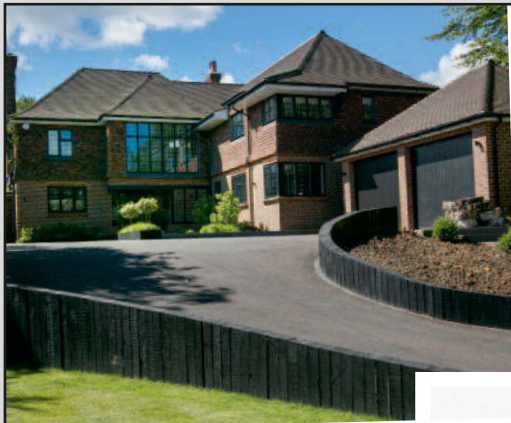


Ernie Pollard

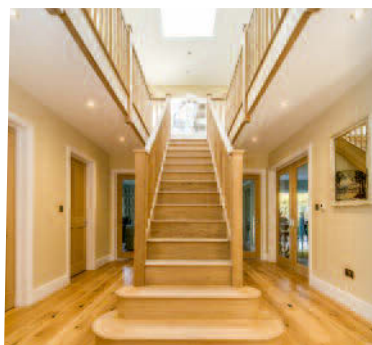
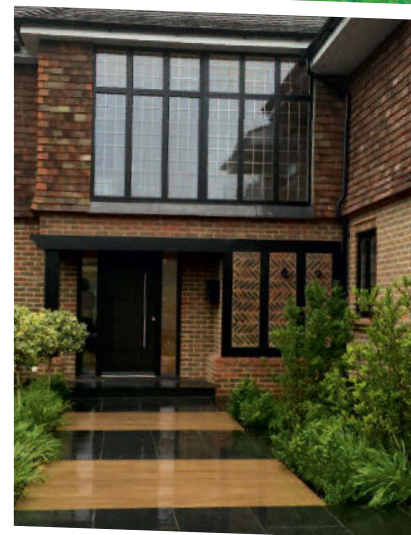
There is a website on Collingwood Ingram at www.erniepollard.jimdo.com



Blossoms: the English summary describes how the book 'takes the reader from Ingram's first sojourn in Japan in 1902 to an historic speech in Tokyo in 1926 exhorting Japanese royalty and industry leaders to save the dying blossoms at a time of rapid modernization and westernization. Her environmental detective story describes for the first time how the blossoms survived and examines the flowers' political and cultural heritage throughout the 20th century, including



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News from Benenden School

At the time of writing we are celebrating another strong set of A Level results, with more than a quarter of grades (26 per cent) at A*. This is particularly pleasing in a year when reaching the top grade has become more demanding as a result of Government reforms.

As ever, behind the overall figures there were some outstanding individual results. Forty-one girls (45 per cent) achieved at least three A grades and 10 per cent of girls are celebrating at least three A* grades each.

Girls are now heading off to study at world-renowned institutions including Cambridge, Oxford, London School of Economics (LSE), Imperial College London and Durham. Eleven per cent of this year's leavers will be studying at sought-after institutions in America, including MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) which was ranked number one in the QS 2018 World University Rankings.

We are now awaiting the GCSE results and look forward to updating you in the next edition on the achievements of our Year 11 girls. Meanwhile, life at Benenden continues apace even though it is the school holidays. The Austrian summer school are about to complete their three-week stay with us and this year's Kent Music School visit was particularly memorable, as it marked the 70th anniversary of our association with them. We were delighted to host a very successful event celebrating this landmark. The Benenden Village Tennis Tournament was another great success and we were privileged to host The Band of The Brigade of Gurkhas for a reception and sounding retreat.

In addition we have managed to carry out various improvement works around the site so overall it has been a busy yet productive summer!

Samantha Price, Headmistress

The Friends of St George's Church
are proud to sponsor a concert by

The Music Scholars of Benenden School

Friday 13 October 2017
at 7.30pm in St George's Church

Tickets: £5 for adults - 16 and under Free
(ticket includes refreshments, a glass of wine/soft drink)

Tickets available in church after services,
from Benenden's Community Shop,
or from Jo Clube 01580 242956 jo.clube@aviva.com

Workshop for small businesses

Wednesday 11 October, Blue Hen Flowers,
Benenden, 9.30-1pm

Want to take your business up a gear? Are you keen to work more efficiently? Do you want advice on best use of social media? Then come to this workshop with Chloe Scragg of Executive Support Consultants.

Now a true 'company of one', she helps time-starved freelancers and small businesses with limited resources to navigate their way through the myriad tools and systems available on the market in order to grow their businesses and reduce the feeling of being completely overwhelmed.

Chloe can share first-hand experience and case studies of where to focus your energies, how to utilise your best skills, the importance of up-skilling, the need to find proactive people to help you and which tools will aid your business, and which ones will waste your time.

If like me you just want to grow flowers (make truffles/run a holiday let/make jewellery), but can't keep up with all that needs to be done, come to an interactive morning with time to share experience and problems over coffee and cake with other wonderful small businesses.

The cost is £35.00. To book please contact:

Sheila Hume 240838

bluehenflowers@gmail.com

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Planning Matters

The August meeting of Benenden Parish Council's Planning Committee considered an application to turn a redundant poultry shed near Springhill Farm off Standen Street into residential accommodation. The committee made the following comments about the application and it was agreed to circulate them to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the press.

"BPC supports the application for conversion of the poultry shed into residential accommodation.

The council is, however, extremely surprised and concerned that the applicants' original wish to create three dwellings in this large ex-agricultural building received such a negative response from TWBC planning department at the pre-planning stage.

BPC believes that this site would be eminently suitable for multiple occupancy and that small one or two-bed dwellings are much more urgently needed locally than the five-bed home now proposed.

The council notes that TWBC recently agreed to the application for an estate of 12 dwellings - also outside the village 'envelope' - against concerted opposition from the village and the Parish Council.

If TWBC wishes to meet its new houses obligations we believe it must urgently review its policies concerning multiple dwellings in more rural parts of its parishes and pay far greater attention to the views and wishes of local people and their representatives."

To view full application on TWBC's Planning Portal, search for: 17 02209 FULL

Village Lunch

Tuesday 19 September, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm

All welcome - £4 a head. If you need a lift please let us know and we can arrange it. Please contact Jan Dunkley on 01580 242936 if you haven't already put your name down but would like to come. We look forward to seeing you.

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

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

For more information please visit:

www.benendencricket.com

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

07834 572838 or email brunrichard@btinternet.com



Benenden Cricket Club

Our home matches in September are:

Sunday 3 September v Shepway Stragglers 1pm

Saturday 9 September v Sandhurst 1.30pm

Saturday 16 September v The Stoats 1pm

Sunday 24 September v Staplehurst 2nd XI 1pm

Richard Brunt, Club Captain

New Primary School - Slow Progress

The long, hard road to a new primary school for Benenden became a little shorter last month when an application for slight amendments to the plans were approved by Kent County Council.

The application involved a reduction to the internal floor area, with "associated minor alterations to the elevational appearance and changing the external surface within the courtyard from paving to permeable tarmac".

Tree protection measures and "reptile mitigation" strategies are currently being considered by the County Planning Authority and school governors are due to meet with KCC at the school on 15 September. Watch this space.

(Details can be viewed at www.kent.gov.co.uk/planning,TW/12/1442)



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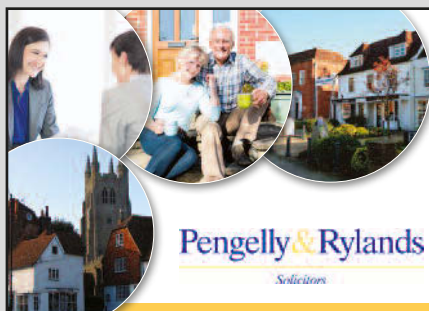
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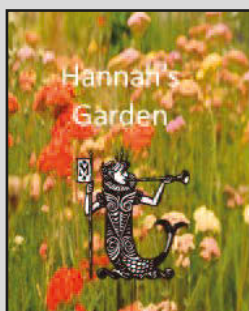


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Serves 6

Cooking time 30min

300g blackberries

100g icing sugar

1 lemon, juiced

300ml double cream

A few extra blackberries to garnish

METHOD

- Place the blackberries in a blender with the icing sugar and a squeeze of lemon juice.
- Whiz to a puree then pass through a sieve into a large bowl.
- Stir in 300ml double cream and whip to a fluffy mousse using an electric whisk.
- Spoon into individual glasses or a large serving bowl, and decorate with a few extra blackberries if wished.
- Eat straight away, or cover and chill.

Jane Drysdale 291027

drysdale@bishopsdaleoast.co.uk

Iden Green and Benenden WI

At our August meeting we heard Mr Lemont speak interestingly on 'Labels and Logos', telling us the history and the law around their trade marks, how even colour cannot be changed, e.g. Cadbury's Milk Tray purple.

The Coffee Morning at Blue Hen Flowers was a happy time with the hostess making everyone very welcome and members freely visiting the flower garden where many were in bloom.

Dates to remember:

Thursday 7 September, Visit to Tenterden Light Railway and Lunch

Tuesday 19 September, Laura Watkins - An American Road Trip, Memorial Hall, 2-4pm

Tuesday 19 October, Mrs Garnier - Whale Watching, Memorial Hall, 2-4pm

Elisabeth Spicer 752232



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★ To reduce congestion, allow time to walk or car share, if you can

First Drama Workshop Success

The free two-day Drama Workshop in August was a great success. Run by Benenden Players and 75% funded by the Benenden Bonfire Society, it attracted 30 youngsters to learn drama techniques with Hannah Miles-Watson and work with the brilliant Strangeface mask company.

With Strangeface the children experimented how to use a variety of emotions and states of being to change their physicality. They then chose a mask and very quickly got great results by becoming a character often very far removed from themselves. It became very tricky to identify the child beneath the mask because the results were so startling.

These characters then fleshed out with names, occupations and voices. Before long the room was full of fascinating masked characters full of originality and imagination. The afternoon was spent slotting these characters into a short story which we showed to parents at the end of the day.

The work that Hannah did with the children mirrored the Strangeface workshop but looked at how they could use similar techniques to create wild and wonderful stories and characters without the masks.

Ruth Clark, Benenden Players



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



Letter to the Editor

Please email the Editor,
benendenparishmagazine@gmail.com

GRAPES GROWN ON STOLEN LAND

It was a great shock to read your article on Israeli wine in last month's magazine. It seemed to ignore totally the deeper issues involved - the inhumanity and suffering which lies behind the wine you are promoting.

Tracy Claridge talked about wine produced in Israel with reference to Joshua, who once fought in the region of this winery, and yet he did not talk about the Palestinians who once owned that "winery" land and fought to protect it in 1948.

Your correspondent is actually in a bit of cleft stick since he works for a company which has this close association with the Harel vineyards, established on land stolen from Palestinians. The kibbutz he called "Harel" was once the Palestinian village of Beit Jiz. In 1948 it was taken by force and renamed after the Harel Brigade of the Haganah, one of several Zionist terrorist organisations involved in fighting British soldiers working for the British Mandate in Palestine at that time. In spite of the terror, many farmers and their families stood their ground, including the villagers of Beit Jiz. To save their children many also fled, as I would have done. Israeli historians try to mislead people into thinking that there was hardly anybody there, or that they all ran away. Neither contention is true.

The article mentions only non-Arab Israeli wine and ignores other producers in this highly militarised region, such as the Italian Cremisan monastery between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Believe me, it takes courage for those not in favour with the Israeli government, to produce wine in the political and military context of what is modern "Israel". I use inverted commas, because its boundaries are ever widening and the Israel recognised by the international community has little in common with the country Israeli school children are taught about in school.

Tracy, if you had the slightest idea of the suffering endured by the Palestinians at the

hands of the military might, you would never have put your article forward for publication. Alas, I must hold the entire editorial staff to blame too, for I suppose articles are approved by the editorial team.

I have met a young Palestinian boy, (one among thousands) who was shot by Israelis in one of the many illegal settlements still being built, even as I write this letter. He is now a paraplegic and cared for, with great dignity, by his parents and grandparents in a refugee camp near Bethlehem. The latter are themselves refugees following the 1948 putsch of Israel against the local Arab population.

I once saw an old Arab farmer confronting a group of Israeli soldiers who were using a JCB to destroy his olive trees. He was unarmed, poorly clothed and had nothing except those olive trees, yet he stood his ground. The Israelis were young, well fed, in military uniform, with guns. That man was brave. How dare you ignore his plight, or that of the young boy, by writing an article to suggest that buying Israeli wine is a fine thing to do, or that growing grapes on stolen land is acceptable.

It is not. I will shout this from the hilltops.
Injustice! Shame!

Hazel Strouts

Peter Thomas who edited last month's magazine, replies:

Tracy Claridge is a hard-working humanitarian who does an enormous amount of unpaid work to help the village of Benenden thrive. He is also a respected wine professional and writes his entertaining column in this magazine on a voluntary basis. He, like his colleagues on the magazine, is sensitive to the plight of oppressed peoples around the world but does not claim to be an expert in the field, so in his wine column he writes about wine and not about politics. It is not within the remit or the resources of this magazine to address global issues, but this does not mean we condone injustice wherever it may be found. We invite Hazel Strouts to write an article about the Arab wine producers she mentions and would be delighted to include it.

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Didn't it rain, children, didn't it rain! - Jazz & Blues

The trouble with the BBC weather forecast is that it's not always wrong. Over the last five years our guest jazz and blues musicians have played to very supportive audiences, often in generally damp conditions and, by bringing a sort of Glastonbury spirit to our little open-air concerts, we have always carried it off. This year, however, the likelihood of heavy rain during the evening was a racing certainty and so, by Friday lunchtime, with the stage already assembled at the back of the Pavilion and the beer and Pimm's tent standing expectantly at the top of the field, we resigned ourselves to either cancelling for bad weather or shifting the event indoors.

Lorraine came to our rescue with the welcome news that the village hall was not only available, but licensed as well. Benenden's shop grapevine, surely the most effective communications medium in the Weald, put the word out; road signs and web sites were all amended; texts and emails sent and telephone calls made.

With a small army of volunteers, we set about transforming the hall into a night club. The barbecue was set up at the back of the building and the bar in the kitchen; bunting, fairy lights and candles were deployed throughout the village hall and, finally, the bands set up their kit, not on the stage, but at the opposite end of the hall.

Any concerns that the change of venue and the dreadful weather would result in a poor attendance were soon dismissed. It was a full house!

The scene was set.

Pete Hadaway opened the evening with the mellifluous sounds of his vibes filling the room as he gave a masterful rendition of many jazz classics. He was followed by Benenden Jazz; more cool standards from Graham Beveridge and the band and the liquid voice of Debbie Katis.

Meanwhile, some of the audience were happily opening up the picnics they had planned for an otherwise dry, outdoor, summer evening at Iden Green. Some were queuing for the quarter-pound Ward-burgers and hot dogs being served up at the barbecue under an enormous gazebo as the rain hammered down on its roof; some were enjoying Larkins Bitter or Old Dairy Uber Brew and Pimm's from the bar. Others were simply moving to the music.

Summertime Blues provided two short sets that included some solo acoustic blues (Bill Lewis) and a mixture of folk/rock and something heavier (Rob Studholme and Sam Dedman). The penultimate set by Benenden Jazz and the final set by Summertime Blues both filled the dance floor and brought to a close an evening with a party atmosphere, fun and good music. The rain stopped as we all left for home, avoiding the puddles and feeling the buzz of having put on another successful Jazz & Blues event in spite of the weather.

Thanks to everyone who helped us and to all who came to support it.

Postscript: The annual Jazz & Blues night developed as part of the village's response to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in June 2012, which built upon an earlier open-air concert at the Pavilion with a similar theme. The nett proceeds from each concert all go to charities, and the musicians, who play for free, choose which charities should benefit, saving that one third of the proceeds goes to the Pavilion Trust registered charity, to help with the upkeep of the building.

Charities benefiting from this year's event will include: Macmillan Cancer Support, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Alzheimer's Society, National Autistic Society, Pilgrims Hospices.

The nett proceeds from this year's event totalled £1,125.00. This was a little less than half the amount raised in July 2016, but then last year was a balmy, sunny evening with a much larger audience; whereas this year - well, didn't it rain!

Benenden's Brexit Challenge

A flurry of reports in recent weeks have suggested that rural areas, including the Weald of Kent, could be radically altered by changes to farming and food production after Britain withdraws from the European Union. The removal of CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) subsidies which are estimated to account for as much as 50% of UK farm income could transform farming with knock-on effects on the landscape of the countryside. Furthermore, say associated reports, Britain's food security and hygiene standards could be drastically reduced if we move to non-European free-trade agreements.

Of immediate concern to many local people, especially those working directly in agriculture, may be the pronouncements of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Secretary, Michael Gove. In a recent speech he said farmers will have to "compete against each other" for taxpayers' money once the CAP subsidies end. Although the government has pledged to keep farming subsidies at their present levels until 2022 there is no commitment beyond that. Organisations like the National Farmers Union fear that, if faced with a choice between the NHS or Education and subsidies to farmers, the latter would likely lose out.

Michael Gove's approach was immediately criticised by an unexpected source - a prominent Brexit supporter, Sir James Dyson, who warned the government not to cut farm subsidies. That itself may not be surprising. As Britain's biggest farmer, with 13,000 hectares in Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and Lincolnshire, the multi-billionaire vacuum cleaner inventor receives around £1.6 million a year in EU farm subsidies. His argument with Michael Gove's position was slightly more nuanced, however. He believes that a post-Brexit free trade deal with Europe is highly unlikely and that the UK will be forced to resort to World Trade Organisation rules with tariffs being imposed on both imports and exports. Ironically Dyson



believes UK farmers will then be at a competitive disadvantage against their European counterparts. Most British meat exports go to the EU, tariff free - on World Trade Organisation rules a 60% tariff would be imposed.

Other commentators fear the unfolding scenario would be far more serious than that. Guardian columnist and 'Remainer' Polly Toynbee said she believed Brexit could "destroy" British farming: "I think a lot of farmers are suddenly realising what it means, they lose their subsidy and if there is this big importing of cheaper food, they really get wiped out. The landscape farmers protect that goes with subsidies, our meat farmers, beef and sheep farmers, couldn't survive without a subsidy so if you take those subsidies away that's the end of them."

Her views are echoed by a Benenden livestock farmer: "from a sheep farmer's perspective, yes, Brexit is probably disastrous. 38% of our lamb goes to Europe, and a large proportion of that to France. The French farmers will be keen to impose tariffs on our lamb as we can produce it more cheaply than them due to our good grass growth and economies of scale."

Others view the Gove speech, which suggested automatic subsidy payments being replaced by grants for environmental measures, as likely to benefit large farms at the expense of small ones. And if there were to be a further decline in smaller 'family-sized' businesses that would almost certainly have an impact on the

countryside as we know it. As a local dairy farmer said: “Smaller farmers will become casualties of Brexit and our lovely countryside will suffer as farmers cannot be expected to manage the landscape for little or no money.” Small hedge-enclosed fields that have been a characteristic of the Wealden landscape for centuries could well be replaced by the large open ‘prairie-style’ vistas of Norfolk. Economies of scale, let alone competition from abroad, would favour barn-based livestock rearing with ever fewer sheep, cattle, pigs and chickens being seen in the open.

And if animal welfare is a concern, so is food hygiene. A recent report from three top academics including the respected food specialist Tim Lang concluded that here are serious risks that standards of food safety will decline if the UK ceases to adopt EU safety rules, and instead accepts free-trade agreements with countries with significantly lower standards. “There are weaker standards not only in China and many developing countries, but also in the USA, and under the Trump administration US standards are likely to decline sharply,” the report says.

The government may have ruled out chlorine-washed chicken and acid-washed pork for the moment, but the Leave campaign promised that exiting the EU would mean cheaper food for us in Britain. Well it might. But if we import beef from the US then we can be pretty certain it will come complete with injected hormones. Wheat and other cereals are

likely to be from GM crops liberally sprayed with the carcinogenic Glyphosate which the European Parliament is trying to ban on this side of the Atlantic.

Farmers round Benenden seem united in believing that, far from pursuing the cheaper food route, we should actually be prepared to pay more. “What we need is higher food prices to protect food security,” says one. A fellow farmer added: “Subsidies or farm support payments, no-one likes them, but they have kept the price of food at a very low level. I think we spend about 15% of our average household budget on food and drink, whereas about 50 years ago we were spending about 30% on food and drink. If we lose support payments, it might be difficult for small farms to make up the shortfall.” The dairy farmer agrees: “As cheap food seems to be a priority, this will only be achieved by smaller farms being taken over by bigger farms who need to use big machines to achieve the economies of scale necessary to compete on the world market.”

And then, as Tim Lang’s report points out, there’s the issue of food security: ‘Supplies could be reduced, prices could become increasingly volatile, environmental sustainability could be further diminished, safety could be imperilled, inequalities could be amplified, and public trust be undermined. Brexit could, all too easily, diminish food security in the UK, where parts of our food system are already far too insecure.’

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A flight of Kiwis in the village

Friday 29 September, Memorial Hall, 7pm

Continuing our tradition of attracting leading winemakers from around the world to Benenden, this month we will welcome Graeme Crosbie from Domain Road in Central Otago to take centre stage at an exciting tasting of some of the best New Zealand has to offer.

Graeme will present four wines from his own estate, including a fine example of the region's signature Pinot Noir grape; then with the help of our friendly wine expert Nick Hillman he will talk us through top Kiwi offerings from Pask and Tironui, both of Hawkes Bay. The following notes will be helpful:

Domain Road Vineyard, Central Otago

Graeme and Gillian Crosbie had nurtured a lifelong interest in wine and real estate when they discovered the perfect plot of land in the centre of the historic gold-mining region of Bannockburn, Central Otago.

On a single estate block of 6.5ha, originally an apricot orchard, they developed a vineyard specialising in Pinot Noir but also with Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling. This first plot was eventually joined by a second on nearby Felton Road, now known as Defiance. With attention to detail in the vineyard and winery, the wines from both display the characteristics of site and vintage that have earned awards ranking them as some of the best available from New Zealand.

Wines to taste: Sauvignon Blanc, Water Race Reisling, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir.

Pask Winery, Hawkes Bay The Pask winery was founded by Chris Pask in 1985 and production has increased steadily since then to around 50,000 cases, based largely on Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Merlot, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon, which they believe are the best varieties for their estate.

Chris pioneered grape varietal plantings in

Benenden's Welcomes Graeme Crosbie - Owner and Winemaker

Friday 29 September
Memorial Hall, 7pm

The Wines of Domain Road,
Central Otago, New Zealand

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the Gimblett Gravels in Hawkes Bay and the winery now owns and manages over 100ha in what has arguably become the leading viticultural site in New Zealand. In 1991, Kate Radburn was appointed as head winemaker and the exceptional success of the wines at shows around the world are testimony to her exceptional talent.

Wines to taste: Gimblett Gravels Declaration Chardonnay, Gimblett Gravels Merlot, Gimblett Gravels Syrah.

Tironui, Hawkes Bay Tironui ('Great View') Estate is a relatively new vineyard of just five acres, established by Richard and Jennifer Brown on virgin hillside in 2002. It nestles just beneath 'Sugarloaf' in Taradale, overlooking New Zealand's oldest winery, Mission Estate, with views across Napier and Kidnapper's Cape in the distance. All grapes are sourced exclusively from their own vineyard.

Wines to taste: Single Vineyard Malbec/ Merlot/ Cabernet Sauvignon.

The tasting takes place on Friday 29 September in the Memorial Hall.

At £12 per head for eight wines and nibbles, this promises to be our best evening yet. Tickets are available from Benenden's Community Shop.

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Hyde's Hikes: Horsmonden Circular

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- 1) Park in the centre of Horsmonden, and with the village green behind you and the Gun & Spitroast pub in front of you, turn left down the road in the direction of Goudhurst.
- 2) After around 100m cross the road and take the footpath on the right, the path opens out into fields, don't go right into the orchards but continue ahead. At the far corner of the orchard turn right along a grassy track past a newly planted vineyard. Continue ahead as the track becomes a surfaced road. At the junction turn left following waymarks.
- 3) At the next junction turn left passing Lewes Heath House, after a driveway about 100m on the right, take the marked path to the right of the main track, this enclosed path reaches a stile into a field with the fence to your right and good views across to Goudhurst. After 50m cross the fence via a stile, this has no waymark on your side but has one on the back! Head diagonally left downhill towards a large barn and the stile to the road becomes visible to the right.
- 4) Turn left along the lane past Share Farm; take the first path on the right crossing a rough field before becoming an overgrown enclosed path. Go through a gate, cross a garden, turn left from the gate and follow the path down to a footbridge crossing the River Teise. Take the left fork 100m after the bridge.
- 5) Go through a gap and bear right to enter a wood, pass a pond on the left continue uphill past Brandfold House, the path meets the B2079 Goudhurst - Marden road.
- 6) Cross over the road and walk the length of Gore Lane to meet the B0279 again, turn right and follow the busy road a short distance to a footpath on the left, just past Monks. Follow this path to Finchurst Granary and turn right along a path between the garden wall and bushes. The path leads to a field with numerous paths. Take the one going diagonally right, past a large pond on your right. Cross the stile in the corner; keep to the right-hand boundary; through a gate to a junction with a track. Turn left here and after 50m where the track bends left, turn right over a bridge crossing the River Tiese again. Bear left over a field bridge just before the metal gate.
- 7) Go up the hill to the top ignoring the cross path, then turn left along the hedge and cross the stile in the corner. Follow the track ahead to the left of the buildings and then past more farm buildings and mobile homes to reach Grovehurst Lane.
- 8) Turn left on the lane and after a short way turn right on the signposted footpath between two fences. Head uphill towards the oak trees, cross a stile and narrow bridge through a gap in the hedge and head towards the mobile phone mast.
- 9) Cross the track with the phone mast on your left and follow the path between tall trees. At the end of the path go through the gate and follow the track to the primary school. Continue ahead along Back Lane past the village hall to meet the main Goudhurst Rd, turn left to return to the starting point.

Jim Hyde, Parish Footpath Co-ordinator





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The Village Gnome

MY LAWN HAS A REVERSE MOHICAN

Mowing machines - don't you just love 'em? Cutting the grass. One of the most satisfying tasks in the garden. Tussocks and dandelions disappear as the thundering beast scythes over them, leaving impeccable stripes on which more or less civilized games of croquet can be played.

The thing is that, much like printers, which always play up just as you are trying to print out your Easyjet boarding pass at the last minute, mowers can sense your mounting stress and play up accordingly. So having mowed two beautiful stripes down the middle of the lawn, you stop and empty the grass bag. Mistake! The mower knows you are now committed and refuses to restart. You take the grass bag back off and peer hopefully into hole. Nothing seems to be snagged. Grass too long for the blades maybe? You go round arduously adjusting the height of each wheel, grazing your knuckles on the fourth when the end bit comes off in your hand. You try to start it again. And again. There is a definite smell of petrol in the air. Beastly thing is flooded. Well you can't let the mower get you down so the answer is obviously to wait ... possibly with a drink in your hand. You distract yourself with minor tasks such as removing the six-foot-high nettles that have appeared behind the aforementioned shrubbery.

Back to the mower and try to start it again. No joy. Dead as a door nail. You check the petrol and then the oil; fiddle with the spark plug; try again. Still no joy so you ring the mower man. The man, to whom you paid a not

inconsiderable sum only a short while ago to service the mower, is apologetic but unable to help. He has 17 machines awaiting his attention - this is, after all, peak mowing season - and he is just off to Barbados for two weeks.

What to do? Your lawn has a reverse Mohican down the middle. You think in desperation that perhaps if you trim it a bit it might look less awful. You get out the trimmer only to recall that you haven't used it for a while as it ran out of cord last time. You rummage around in the garage and eventually find some and try to remember the correct way of loading it, which entails lining up almost invisible arrows. You search the house until you find your spectacles. Return to the trimmer, line up the arrows, thread in the cord and turn as instructed. One side is plainly longer than the other but who cares?

After a great deal of priming the trimmer starts and you have a go at mowing the lawn with it. It becomes apparent that it does matter if the trimmer cords are different lengths as it's cutting rather unevenly. In fact your lawn is beginning to look as if it has a nasty case of mange. You wonder whether it would be ok to cry over a lawn. At this low point your kind neighbour puts their head round the corner and is too polite to exclaim "Oh goodness! What have you done?" so just says "Everything OK?" You sob on their shoulder and explain what has happened. Your neighbour says can they see if they can help and goes over to the mower. It starts first time. MG

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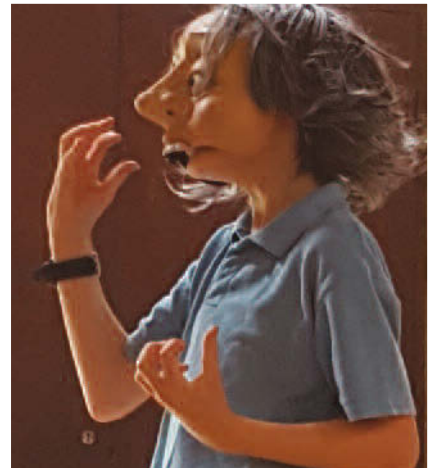
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Above: A village transformed with hardwork, determination and ingenuity: St George's churchyard working party; Jazz & Blues undaunted by torrential rain setting the village hall aglow; Strange faces and extraordinary characters from the Benenden Players' drama workshop
Front cover: Phineas and the giant balloon. Photograph: Sophie Parrott