



# Elmsted with Hastingleigh Community News

*St James the Great  
Elmsted*



*St Mary the Virgin  
Hastingleigh*

December 2020  
January 2021

40p



# Elmsted and Hastingleigh Community Contacts

Elmsted Parish Council  
[www.elmstedpc.org.uk](http://www.elmstedpc.org.uk)

Hastingleigh Parish Council  
[www.hastingleighpc.org.uk](http://www.hastingleighpc.org.uk)

Evington Hall (Bookings)  
([www.evingtonhall.org.uk](http://www.evingtonhall.org.uk))

Evington Hall Committee Hon Sec

ECP Hon Sec

Evington Gardeners Hon Sec

Evington Community Choir

Footpath Walks

**Mr D Harris** 01233 813711

Women's Institute

**Mrs J Bowes** 01233 811875

Parent and Toddler Group

**Mrs L Lawrence** 01233 750987

Neighbourhood Watch Hastingleigh

**Mr G Block** 01233 750415

Neighbourhood Watch Elmsted

**Mr J Argar** 01233 750311

**Tracey Block** 01233 750415  
[clerk.elmstedpc@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.elmstedpc@gmail.com)

**Tracey Block** 01233 750415  
[clerk.hastingleighpc@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.hastingleighpc@gmail.com)

**Shelley** 07401 908249  
[bookings@evingtonhall.org.uk](mailto:bookings@evingtonhall.org.uk)

**Mrs H French** 01233 750483

**Mrs S Boxall** 01233 750206

**Mrs H Ransley** 01233 750949

**Mrs C Jeffery** 01233 750585



# December/January

## in Elmsted with Hastingleigh

**T**he Winter months have arrived, and with them long evenings cosied up next to the fire. It's good to see that Open Reach are starting preparations for the faster broadband. There is a request for applications for Parish Councillors on page 25. Christmas Church Services will hopefully be going ahead, but places need to be booked (p21). ECP are hosting a virtual Christmas coffee morning, see page 26 for details. Just a reminder that this edition of The Community News is two months in one, covering December and January. Subs will be due in the New Year and an envelope will be provided with the February issue. For those of you who advertise with us, you will be receiving renewal notices in January. The Community News team wishes you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. As always letters, articles and comments are very welcome.

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### Submissions

The *Community News* takes no responsibility for misleading advertising or incorrect editorial supplied to us in good faith.

Please provide any promotional or editorial content in Word format rather than pdf. For length, grammar and style issues the Editor reserves the right to edit it.

**Editorial:** [elmstedwithhastingleighnews@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:elmstedwithhastingleighnews@yahoo.co.uk)

**Advertising:** [advertising.communitynews@gmail.com](mailto:advertising.communitynews@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** [secretary.communitynews@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.communitynews@gmail.com)

**Or write to:** The Secretary, 1 Bowl Field, Hastingleigh, TN25 5HT.

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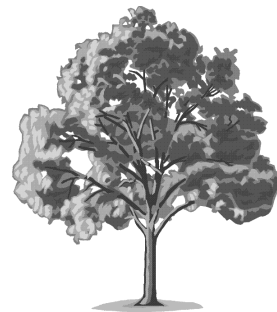
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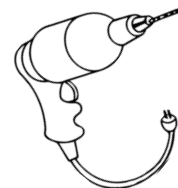
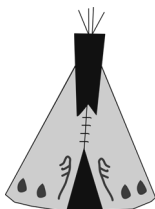
**Most aspects of Household and Garden Maintenance**

*References available*

*Also*

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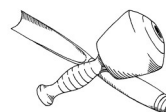
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# Hastingleigh with Elmsted WI

**T**his month I looked at the W.I. pages from the Community News of 1994. The subject for the first speaker of the year was Aromatherapy, and a member, Mrs. D. Mose, was the model for a relaxing face massage. Strong feelings were expressed regarding the future of parts of Lyminge Forest and a letter was to be sent to the Council voicing our disquiet. The Council's reply did nothing to allay members' anxieties. The winning entry for April's competition - a hand-made garment - was an almost 100 year old baby gown brought by Mrs. Lilley. May's meeting covered a lot of business for the upcoming Triennial General Meeting, and afterwards members went to a local hostelry for a meal and chat, celebrating the Institute's 69th birthday. In July, the speaker made use of the new screen in the Hall, to show slides of renovations of her country cottage. August's speaker was a glass engraver. Members were interested to see the tools he used to make the finished items, but 'no-one was brave enough to try them'. In September, members were given a talk about Denman College, and the courses that were on offer there. Sadly, Covid-19 has forced the sale of Denman. Members had a 'Cookery and Preservation Show' at the November meeting, giving a 'tantalising display'. Reports were read out, and Mrs. Gunn handed over the role of President to Mrs. Lorraine Russell. At the Christmas meeting, it was asked if we could have a W.I. notice board in the Hall. After dealing with business, members retired to a 'local inn, where good food wine and conversation were enjoyed by all'.

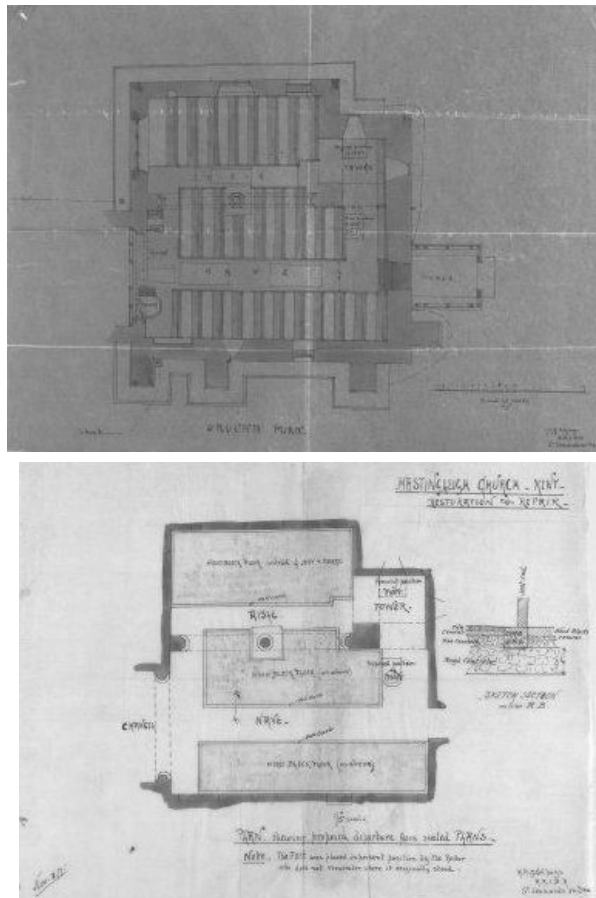
Does anyone have copies of the Community News pre-1989 I could borrow for further articles please?

Fiona Steward  
01303 271735

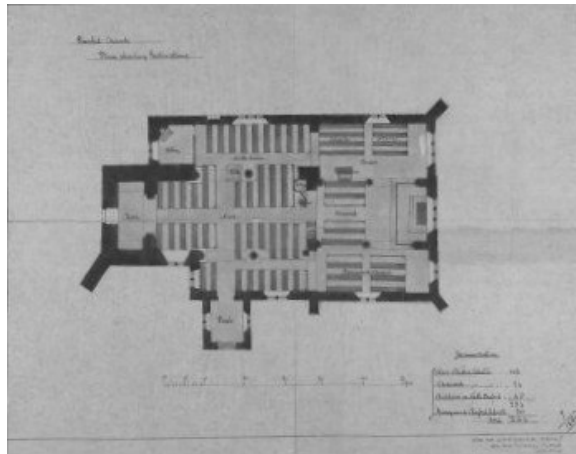
# Floor plans for Elmsted and Hastingleigh churches

**A**t the Lambeth Palace Library are images of what they hold for parish churches. Most of them include floor plans. Below is one of two similar plans for St James Elmsted, and the two dissimilar ones for St Marys Hastingleigh.

Hastingleigh



## Elmsted



Reproduction will be poor within this article but the originals can be viewed from these links: Elmsted, <https://tinyurl.com/y6dtzd4l> Hastingleigh, <https://tinyurl.com/yyhw9xnm>.

Click on the image and using the centre scroll of your mouse you can increase the image to see much more detail. Hold the mouse's left button down to move image around.

The Elmsted plans show box pews. Contrary to an earlier article, these were not removed in the late 1800s because they were still there around 1946 when Sir Filmer Honywood 11th bt. visited the church for the first time. The Hastingleigh ones might reveal some information on the big stone conundrum.

From the library search box you can search for any church.  
History enthusiast

## Library Van

The mobile library van is now due to come on **22nd December** 9.45 to 10.15 at Hall. Books have to be pre-ordered and returned in a plastic bag.



# The Sweet Chestnuts In Our Valley

**C**hestnuts roasting on an open fire...is synonymous with Christmas and all of its traditions, but sweet chestnuts were part of our history long before 20th century festivities and are, in fact, thought to have been one of the first foods ever eaten by humans.

We are surrounded by sweet chestnut trees in the woods around Hastingleigh, many of them coppiced, originally used in the hop pole industry and later for chestnut fencing but, left to grow un-coppiced, they can grow into beautiful and majestic trees: we have some fine examples of these in the Evington Park valley.

During the 18th century, sweet chestnuts were a popular choice for parkland planting and were an iconic part of the British landscape. If you drive down the hill from Hastingleigh towards the old Evington estate, at the sharp bend look over to your right: there were originally 9 standing in a clump (4 fell in the 1987 storm). They were planted by the Honywood family around 1800 after the sad loss of their 9 year-old child, who was thrown from a cart as the horses rounded the tight bend. There were other horse accidents on that bend, and the Honywoods had the road changed to flatten out the curve. If you look across, you can see the ridge-line of the original road running down towards the old house.

Our history of sweet chestnuts go back long before the 18th century: they have been a staple food in Southern Europe for millennia, and were an abundant substitute for cereals, consumed especially in areas where cereals may not grow well or when the harvest failed. As they have a high starch content (twice as much as a potato) and rich in vitamins and minerals, communities relied on them, gaining sweet chestnuts the reputation of the bread tree (*l'arbre à pain*). As one mountain woman put it: "A chestnut grove is a better provider than a man; easier to manage, too."

It is likely the Romans introduced the sweet chestnut to Britain and planted wherever they conquered. The Roman armies marched

on a diet of chestnut porridge. In Italy, the Roman love affair with the sweet chestnut continues as they make the most of this versatile nut by roasting, boiling and puréeing them into both sweet and savory dishes; grinding them into flour; and, in Modena, soaking them in red wine before roasting. The French make marrons glacé - a candied chestnut involving 16 different processes; or simply roast them on an open fire. But the Roman porridge, I have yet to try. Rose Robus.



## ‘So they do Say.!

**M**igrants crossing the English Channel are in the news. After the many court battles to deport an illegal migrant, it costs £12,000 to charter a flight to return them. (Spectator)

Tennis player Maria Sharapova, known as The Queen of Screams had her scream recorded and measured: it was 101 decibels, more than a Boeing 747 as it lands. Her screams are absent when she is practicing. It has been shown that grunting can help players hit the ball harder, skilled players hitting it! 4 per cent faster during rallies and 7 per cent faster during a serve.

Handguns are available on the streets of Croydon, Surrey for as little as £30. (The Times, 26th September).

In New York City, from January the first to the beginning of October, there have been 1204 shootings with 1402 victims.

NewSpeak: It started off with ‘difficulties’ which was changed to ‘challenges’. Now politicians have ‘conversations’, whereas they used to have discussions.

TW

# In The Garden

**W**ith December underway when you receive this, and January to come, we used to be able to say that we are in the depths of winter. Well, that may be but, as I write this in mid-November, the weather is unseasonably mild. A mere touch of frost has appeared once or, at most, twice on our flat roof only to have disappeared once daylight and a bit of sun appeared.

The flowers just cannot stop blooming. The Jasmine just outside our back door is in full flower and queen bumblebees are finding it a daily attraction with their heavy lumbering buzzing. Butterflies are still not hibernating and ladybirds are flying on many days. Christmas Box looks as though it is about to burst into flower and although the Michaelmas daisies have at last died down, the honeybees are finding plenty of other flowers to feast upon in the fine, warm days - ivy in particular. And, of course, the grass keeps growing but is difficult to mow for, with the shorter days, there is not time to dry out before the sun dips down again. I'm beginning to wonder if our climate is becoming more like New Zealand which, in some ways, might be quite nice; but when it is accompanied by a lack of Arctic ice, we don't need much reminding of the dangers arising from rising sea levels and the havoc that it will bring to low-lying coastal shores, and flooding elsewhere from the spells of very heavy rainfall.

This late flowering interferes with what we used to expect in cutting back perennial flowers so they can have a proper rest for the winter months. We just have to be adaptable in the face of climate change.

So what jobs are good to get on top of? The greenhouse is now clear of tomatoes (good crop this year if you refer back to my earlier articles) and cucumbers. This is a moot point, I know, but I still dislike the modern fumigating 'bombs' to clear the greenhouse of overwintering pests so I use the age-old sulphur candle. These are no longer sold in garden centres so I obtained some flowers of sulphur from eBay and filled an old tin I keep for the purpose and part-bury a paper wick in the sulphur which lights readily on the greenhouse floor

while I back out rapidly and close the door to escape the poisonous fumes. It can then be left for a day or two before opening the door and window vents to clear the remaining taint of the chemical. I usually have a pot or two of parsley for overwintering and these are removed while this operation is carried out and then returned to the warmer environment inside.

Aqua Dulce broad bean seeds are pot-sown at this time of year in the greenhouse and, once safely germinated, are transplanted outside into their permanent bed; they are the first beans of the spring to be harvested. They are slow to germinate and the process can be speeded up by soaking the seeds in water for 36 hours before sowing.

We are harvesting leeks and I'm afraid to say that it is a disappointment that in the mild autumn weather they suffer a degree of rust on their outer leaves, which have to be discarded. Our carrots and parsnips have a tendency to fork – our soil is too fertile for them to behave themselves and tunnel straight down to produce show-shaped roots.

For years I have grown Groninger Brussels Sprouts as it was the only open-pollinated seed I could obtain, and I favour the open-pollination to naturally foster biodiversity as they will breed true, whereas the F1 hybrids cannot. However, this year we now have another variety called 7 Hills, a so-called dwarf type that appealed to me, for the Groninger grow so tall they push the protective nets up. Well, 7 Hills clearly don't read the same books as me for they have ambition and have grown almost to the same height!

Clearing fallen leaves is a useful task and, if you are patient, storing them in a ring of wire netting can eventually produce useful leaf mould to augment your compost, all of which can be spread on top of the vegetable and flower beds in the winter months to save having to do it in the spring.

With the Covid lock-downs many more people have taken to gardening, which I hope has benefitted both their physical and mental health. Another result has been a boom in seed sales, so make sure you order yours early for 2021 so you don't miss out.

Fred

# ‘Sir’ 1927 - 2020

**H**enry John Nancollas MBE, head of Bodsham C of E primary school from 1954 to 1986, died earlier this year from COVID-19. Born in Llanelli, South Wales in 1927, his enthusiasm for rugby, cycling and dogs developed at an early age. His happiest memories from his youth included playing rugby for Llanelli grammar school at Stradey Park and acquiring a Russian Borzoi called Boris.

After training as a teacher at Trinity College, Carmarthen he completed his military service from 1946 to 1948 and joined Hurst Primary School in Bexley. He quickly came to the attention of Freda Weal, another young teacher at the school. A tandem bicycle was bought, and they married in 1950.

After a few years teaching in Canterbury, aged 26 John was appointed as the head of Bodsham School and ‘Sir and Mrs Sir’ moved to School House. Here he got to grips with the challenges of running a rural school with ancient plumbing, a school kitchen in the old vicarage stables, and a home without electricity. Bodsham School became his life’s work, here he could invest in the development of young minds, in glorious surroundings, without the constraints that a larger school might bring.

Although appointed an Inspector of Schools in the 1960s, he chose to spend the rest of his career at Bodsham. Many former students will recall his creative approach to learning, not least through major projects such as Bodsham New Town and the Round the World Yacht race. He was frequently asked to lecture at conferences about his work.

Outside school John was an enthusiastic member of the Evington Players, clerk to the Parish Council, and was involved in the building of Evington Hall. However, his main passion was the school and the young people he taught. Right to the end of his life he talked about his wonderful boys and girls and what they meant to him.

On his retirement from Bodsham, John was awarded an MBE for services to education though he maintained that it was for services to

rural plumbing. He and Freda moved to Kennington, where one of his greatest joys was past students calling in. He continued to ride his bicycle into his late 80s. The deaths of Freda in 2015 and his son Tim in 2018 hit him hard and his memories of Bodsham became even more important. He is survived by his daughter Sarah and granddaughter Bryony.

John Nancollas, a proud Welshman who gave his life to Bodsham School will be remembered fondly by the hundreds of children he inspired.





'Sir' in his first few years at the school with Bill.  
Bill used to sleep under Sir's desk during classes and then  
play with the pupils in breaks.

# Church Services



<u>Date</u>		
06/12	First Sunday	09:30 – Hastingleigh – Communion
13/12	Second Sunday	09:30 – Waltham -Communion
20/12	Third Sunday	09:30 – Elmsted – Communion
27/12	Fourth Sunday	10:00 Benefice service at Wye
3/01	First Sunday	09:30 – Hastingleigh – Communion
10/01	Second Sunday	09:30 – Petham -Communion
17/01	Third Sunday	09:30 – Waltham – Communion
24/01	Fourth Sunday	09:30 – Elmsted – Communion
31/01	Fifth Sunday	09:30 – Hastingleigh – Communion
<p>All communion services are for all four congregations to worship together, and please bring your own bread, (and wine if you would like).</p> <p><b>Please do not attend if you are at all unwell</b></p> <p>All are subject to the government allowing church services to recommence - For up to date service info after the magazine goes to print, visit the Wye Benefice website. <a href="https://www.wyebenefice.org.uk">https://www.wyebenefice.org.uk</a></p>		

Priest-in-charge: The Rev Ravi Holy: The Vicarage, Wye 01233 812450  
 ravi.holy@wyebenefice.org.uk Associate priest: The Rev Lorraine Lawrence  
 (with special responsibility for Hastingleigh, Elmsted, Petham, Waltham):  
 The Vicarage, Hastingleigh, 01233 750987 or 07894 034409  
 mailto: revlorrainelawrence@icloud.com. Churchwardens: Mrs Bacon  
 01233 750327, Mrs R Doyle 01227 700296. United Wye Benefice 01233  
 813793 [www.wyebenefice.org.uk](http://www.wyebenefice.org.uk)

 <u>Christmas Services</u> 	
24/12	4.00pm, Hastingleigh, a service of Christmas readings with recorded music. (This will be as family friendly as we can possibly make it, and we will be looking for volunteers, both young and not so young, to read. Strictly by advance booking, with Lorraine or Roz, and no access on the day, sorry.)
24/12	11.30pm, Petham, midnight communion. (Please let Mary or Jo know in advance if you wish to attend as numbers will be limited by social distancing restrictions.)
25/12	Christmas Day. 10.00am, Waltham, Christmas communion. (Again, please let either Rosemary Doyle or Chris Cox know in advance if you would like to attend.)
<b>These are all subject to COVID 19 restrictions, which means limited spaces, so ALL Christmas services need to be signed up for in advance!</b>	

<b>This month's church flowers and cleaning volunteers:</b>		
	<b>St Mary's</b>	<b>St James'</b>
Dec 5 <sup>th</sup> Dec 12 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs Boxall Mrs Pell	Mrs Jeffrey
Dec 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec 26 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs Bowes Mrs Helmer	Mrs Fox Mrs Leutner
2021 Jan 2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan 9 <sup>th</sup>	Mrs Bacon Mrs Geering Mrs Sharp Mrs Hill	Mrs Gregory Mrs Pay
Jan 16 <sup>th</sup> Jan 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Dr & Mrs Lawson Mrs Day	Mrs Denny Mrs Healy

# From The Vicarage

**A**s I sit down to write this, the whole household is stuck firmly indoors, awaiting the results of a Covid 19 test. A situation I'm sure some of you have been in, or know someone who has.

During this phase, no one sets foot outside the house, not even to walk the dog. Those are the rules, and so that is what we must do. It's amazing how many things seem to need doing, the second one knows they can't be done. It's rather like the phenomenon where one's nose is always itchiest when your hands are full!

So while we wait, and hope, thoughts turn to plans for the upcoming season. It's going to be like no Christmas we've ever had before. Even in the WW1 trenches the war stopped for carols and football. During the blitz, folk sang carols in the bomb shelters and no matter how severe the rationing, people still celebrated Christmas together, wherever and however they could.

This Christmas however, all our carol singing will have to be done, either indoors with the family or the radio, or in our heads. The idea of church without bursting into 'Away in a manger, or watching little ones act out the Christmas story, seems so alien and sad that it is hard to see a way past.

However, have Christmas we will, and we will strive to make it the best Christmas it can possibly be.

We may not be able to sing, but we can read it loud. We may not be able to have a nativity play, but we can still tell the Christmas story. The incredible joy of the announcements of the Angels can still be shared through listening to recorded music of choirs whose joy was captured in previous years. We will endeavour to make this a Covid safe, but special nonetheless, Christmas. If no one selfishly panics, we can all share in the festive cheer of food and drink. I'm guessing the television companies will go out of their way to bring us some really good television and thanks to the wonders of modern technology, if we cannot be with our families in person, we can at least speak on the phone or over the internet.

If we are allowed, then those on their own could consider forming a

bubble with someone else on their own who lives nearby, so as not to have to spend Christmas alone. (Please check up to date guidelines on this.)

Maybe we could give a gift or care package, containing Christmas treats to someone we know will be alone for Christmas, if we cannot mix with them, in order to brighten their day a little.

At times like these, it's love for one's neighbour that helps to make things a little brighter for all. I'm not trying to be the village guide to Christmas in a pandemic, (although I'm sure I sound like it!) I'm trying to encourage us all to have the best possible Christmas we can, and help others to do the same.

What are those words we sing so often at this time of year? Oh yes, Peace on Earth and goodwill to all. So be an unsung, (or at least not singing) hero for someone this Christmas, and may I wish you all the very best of love and good wishes for Christmas, and the hope of a brighter, and virus free, new year.

Happy Christmas and a blessed NEW year to you all.

Lorraine

## Seasonal Thanks

Evington Community Project would like to thank everyone for their continued support throughout the year.

By way of a sign of our appreciation of your support, we would like to invite you all to a virtual get together on ZOOM where 4 extra 100 Club draws will take place.

Please join us with a mince pie and a glass of mulled wine on **Saturday 19th December at 10.30.**



ZOOM meeting  
Meeting ID: **872 286 0605**  
Passcode: **BR8JzH**



# History Enthusiast

## More items of interest from Elmsted Parish Council meetings 1917-1926

**1917:** One councillor vacancy vice T Nickolls being elected chairman vice Rev T Hill who had moved to the rectory at Little Chart; W Birch elected clerk vice F Naylor; Edward Tappenden, chairman of Hastingleigh and Elmsted gardening society, was appointed distributor of seed potatoes for the parishes; buildings' rates 2s 4d in £. T Nickolls and S Hopkins elected overseers.

**1918:** J May no longer a councillor, councillor vacancies now two; buildings' rates now 3s 0d in £.

**1919:** T Goldup, S Hopkins and T File elected councillors vice W Spillett, E Young and one vacancy; still one vacancy; it was decided that the peace celebrations should not be paid out of the rates - Rev Curtis and Mr Taylor were in attendance it was also agreed to accept the county council's offer of 2d per tail for rats - Mr Lucas to keep account.

**1920:** Little recorded.

**1921:** Mr Long of Court Lodge was elected councillor vice a vacancy.

**1922:** Rev H Hammond, D Argar and R Turner elected councillors vice Mr Long, T Goldup and R Pilcher; one vacancy vice T File; tithe map to be inspected to gather more information about the footpath from Bodsham farm to Evington Place, right away to Mr Mills's farm and query over the ownership of the water tank at Bodsham Green.

**1923:** Water tank to be cleared out by owner; protest to Kent education committee over the expense the parish is required to meet; District Surveyor to be advised of dangerous corner leading from Hill Street.

**1924:** W Twynham elected counsellor vice a vacancy; every effort should be made to keep rates as low as possible.

**1925:** Little recorded.

**1926:** Meeting held at The George Inn; agreement reached with Mr George Hands owner of land at Six Mile to widen the road at Six Mile Corner; Messrs Back Bros have offered land at top of Dean Hill to

overcome dangerous corner; overseer posts to cease and be replaced by two representatives on the new rating authority and W Brice of Spong Farm and S Hopkins of Pett Bottom Farm were elected.

(To be continued)

History Enthusiast

# Your Local Parish Council Needs You!

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and expertise?

# Evington Community Project

**D**uring this difficult time, we have really missed being together with friends. In particular the monthly coffee morning and the camaraderie this brings.

To try and resolve this, albeit only partially, ECP have purchased a Zoom license for the community as a whole.

I would, therefore, like to invite as many of you as would be able to join me for a “virtual coffee morning.”

**10.30am on Wednesday 9th December.**

Below are the details to join - if you would like to join but need help accessing Zoom, please call 01233750236.

## **ZOOM meeting**

**Meeting ID: 872 286 0605**

**Passcode: BR8JzH**

It is ECPs intention that this licence should mean that as many groups as wish to can use Zoom for meetings, get together etc.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Virtual Coffee Morning on 9th December - don't forget to bring your own coffee!

Robin

EVINGTON COMMUNITY PROJECT



The winning numbers for the November 2020 Draw are:

1st Prize: No. 30

2nd Prize: No: 10

3rd Prize: No: 86

Next draw to be held virtually on Wednesday 9th December at 11am.  
Many thanks to all of the 100+ Club Members for your support

# Farming Notebook

Ringin' out the bells for some home made  
festive cheer from High Chimney Farm

**D**ing dong merrily on High  
Sweep the Chimney, Santa's nigh  
Not just the Chimney needs some brushing through,  
Grain store, tractors and drill are cleaned out too  
In fields some fence posts will be for a mend  
And there're tasks needing workshop time to spend  
The office has paperwork piled up high to do,  
And priority are Xmas checklists to run through  
Homemade this year's festive Yule aims to be  
We'll bake and make, take note craft queen Kirstie.  
(With perhaps some help from our star village store  
plus a few bits online shopped and bought to our door)  
Ding Dong merrily on High  
Deck the Halls, Santa's nigh  
So gather up boughs of bright holly red  
But leave some there so the birds are well fed  
Our blackbirds and thrushes, fieldfares too  
Find those sparkling berries a tasty brew.  
And what of our iconic Christmas robin?  
For red breast those soggy mealworms will win  
So off to our Award winning Hardres farmshop  
For Ruddock's treats of worms and sunflower tops  
(But watch where you lay these tasty treats,  
For at High Chimney, Claws, our cat, is a tricky beast)  
Ding dong merrily on High  
Bake the Pudding, Santa's nigh  
Our Figgie pudding's from great Grannie's notes  
With homegrown fruits, potatoes, cobnuts and oats.  
We stir and wish, then add lucky pudding charms

Of sixpences in paper to make sure no one harms!  
 This year's choice of cake's a Gugelkopf almond ring  
 From Swiss Grandma's delicious "Weihnachten" cooking.  
 Jams, chutneys, great Tantie Lotti's spiced stars,  
 And out the cupboard elderflower and brews in jars.  
 (In the cooking fest, we must watch out for the grab  
 of gymnastic Saxon, our ever hungry black lab )  
 Ding Dong merrily on High  
 Light up the tree, Santa's nigh  
 With spade, chainsaw and shears, it's off to our wood,  
 To find a shaped fir tree that inside could be stood.  
 They have grown so tall, but with haircuts are groomed  
 To fit in our festive bedecked sitting room.  
 Out come the baubles, some of quite an age now  
 A 30 wash cycle for angel, star and felted cow.  
 Our solar panels, give "eco-power" for tree light,  
 Those rechargeable candles that can flicker all night.  
 (But a new Fire extinguisher stands ready to spinkle  
 When we light some real candles for a Christmas Eve twinkle).  
 Ding Dong merrily on High  
 Hang up the Stockings, Santa's nigh  
 Fresh baked mince pies, with Santa's dash of sherry  
 Add garden carrots to keep those reindeer merry!  
 Next look up Mary Berry's rules for roasties  
 And Delia's way to make "français" sprouts with toasties ( poetic  
 licence for croutons! )  
 Stuff the turkey, wrap those last gifts just in time.  
 Then midnight mass (virtually?) and hear the Season's chimes.  
 Christmas 2020 may not be as we hoped to spend.  
 So come the Festive Day our glass we'll raise to send  
 The warmest Christmas Greetings to You All and every One,  
 And Health, Peace and Friendship for the year of '21



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or more of our animals.

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and a Peaceful New Year  
and look forward to seeing you all again in 2021

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