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Magazine
November 2018

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Editorial



At Cambridge University, there's precious little remembrance going on, so it seems. The students' union has decided that wearing poppies to commemorate the dead of two World Wars is an act of glorification that the modern world can do without, which makes you wonder quite what they're being taught in history lessons at this hallowed seat of learning.

In Benenden, meanwhile, I like to think we'll be wearing those symbolic flowers to celebrate the peace earned by the selflessness of those who gave their lives on our behalf. It's a simple message and one that hits home especially hard in a village like ours, which lost 32 of its young men in the conflict of 1914-18. In this issue, 100 years on from the end of the 'Great War', we do our bit to ensure that their sacrifice will never be forgotten.

There's a full programme of events advertised within these pages to mark the centenary, but also plenty of ways in which we can make our own tiny sacrifices on behalf of others. It goes against the grain to compare a morning helping with the autumn village clean-up to the horrors of the Somme, but surely this is what those selfless souls were fighting for: the chance for those at home to live decent and peaceful lives in a spirit of community and goodwill.

Yes, we can all put a poppy on our lapel, but we if we can also chip in with a bit of litter picking, maybe a few hours on the churchyard working party or some kind of engagement with the progress of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, then we'll be 'doing our bit' to honour the precious democracy that has been preserved for us.

Even if all we do is go along for a whizz-bang night at the village bonfire on 3 November, then we'll have at least celebrated one of the freedoms and privileges saved for us by brave men all those decades ago.

Peter Thomas, 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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Village Calendar

October

Saturday 27	Stephen Message, Art Exhibition, Memorial Hall, 10-5pm	p.35
Saturday 27	Quiz Night, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Sunday 28	Stephen Message, Art Exhibition, Memorial Hall, 10-4pm	p.35

November

Friday 2	Woodland Wide Games, Iden Green Congregational Church, 7pm	
Friday 2	All Souls' Day Service, St George's Church, 7.30pm	p.13
Saturday 3	Churchyard Working Party, St George's, Benenden, 9.30-12noon	
Saturday 3	Benenden Bonfire and Fireworks, The Glebe, 5.30pm	p.11
Sunday 4	Tom Bell, Organ Recital, St George's Church, 6pm	p.13
Friday 9	Oh! What a Lovely War, Benenden Village Hall, 7.30pm	p.21
Saturday 10	Autumn Village Clean, Benenden's Shop and Iden Green Pavilion, 9am	p.13
Saturday 10	The Trench Foot Revue, Benenden Village Hall, 7.15pm	p.15
Saturday 10	Cyril Moore Skittles Evening for the Poppy Appeal, St George's Club, 8pm	
Sunday 11	Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the End of WWI, St George's Church and afterwards in the Glebe Field, 5.30pm	p.15
Friday 16	The Friends of St George's Annual Quiz, Benenden Village Hall, 7.15pm	p.13
Saturday 17	Quoits, St George's Club, 8.30pm	
Sunday 18	Messy Church, St George's Church, 4-6pm	p.31
Monday 19	Parish Council Meeting, Memorial Hall, 7pm	
Tuesday 20	Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm	p.31
Tuesday 20	Iden Green and Benenden WI, Christmas Party, Memorial Hall, 2pm	p.29
Friday 23	The Wines of Luis Felipe Edwards, Chile, Benenden School Café, 7pm	p.36
Saturday 24	Quiz Night, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Tuesday 27	Merry and Bright, Benenden School, 3pm	

Benenden Youth Club/Streetcruizer, age 11+

Tuesdays at Benenden Village Hall, 6.30-8.30pm

Coffee Shop

Wednesdays in the Memorial Hall, 10-12noon

Benenden Bowls Club

Thursdays on the recreation field, practice night, 6.30pm

Cakes & Chaos: Cafe and Toddler Group

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

Refuse Lorry Collections

Saturday 3 November for Garden/Compostable Waste

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

Saturday 17 November for Domestic Waste

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

Parish Council



How many people do you know who claim to be 'turned off' by politics? Political apathy is one of the defining features of British life, after all. Even at General Elections, turnout hovers at around two thirds and local elections in 2017 saw a turnout of only 35.1% (and that was up on previous years). Only in Britain would Brenda from Bristol find herself feted as some kind of folk hero: a fact which is, in my view, deeply depressing. How can one not, (even in an arguably flawed democracy such as ours), wish at least to have the opportunity to help improve the lives of one's fellow citizens?

We complain, don't we, when our country roads are infested with huge trucks, when our pubs are closing and when our village schools are housed in buildings unfit for purpose? We tut when parishes are deluged with applications from developers who wish to impose ugly, expensive and unnecessary buildings upon the rural landscape, and shake our heads when those same developers seem unable to provide the sort of housing local people need; and we fume on learning that our refuse and waste services have been cut or when some residents tell us they can't negotiate footpaths for fear of being impaled upon brambles.

You are surely ahead of me: all those things are the result of political decisions. Now, I'll grant you that parish councils can influence national governments in much the same way as, say, a stalled Nissan Micra on an unmanned level crossing influences the 9.17 Inter-City from London to Inverness, but that isn't the point: the point is, there are matters a parish council such as ours in Benenden can and does tackle, including all of the issues mentioned above as well as many, many more.

Westminster, County and even Borough politicians may deem such matters 'parochial', but then so do we; the difference is, we don't consider parochial a term of abuse. Being a member of a parish council may be the political equivalent of lighting a candle rather than cursing the darkness but, as your representatives, our aim is to make this parish a place where everyone who wants a say will be given a hearing and if their voice warrants it, action will follow; action that will be designed to protect our community from things that threaten, and to institute those that enhance.

Russell Cruse, Parish Councillor

Caroline Levett, Benenden Parish Council Clerk
01580 240371 clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org

For more information see our website www.benendenparishcouncil.org or find us on facebook

Parish Council Meeting
Monday 19 November 2018,
Memorial Hall, 7pm

Church Calendar

St George's Church

Rector: Revd David Commander 240658 revdavidcommander@gmail.com (day off: Thursday)

Churchwarden: Tracy Claridge 240454 maisonsicheluk@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.

Friday 2 November

7.30pm All Souls' Day Service

Sunday 4 November

8am Communion

10am All-age Communion
and Sunday School

5pm Choral Evensong
6pm Organ Recital

Sunday 11 November

8am 1662 Communion

10.45am Remembrance
Service

5.15pm Commemoration of
of the 100th Anniversary of
the End of WWI

Sunday 18 November

8am Communion

10am Sung Eucharist

4pm Messy Church

Sunday 25 November

8am Communion

10am Morning Worship

Mission Church, Sandhurst

Rector: Revd David Commander 240658 revdavidcommander@gmail.com (day off: Thursday)

Every Tuesday 10am Communion

Iden Green Congregational Church

Elder: Tobin Bird 240027 www.idengreen.org.uk

Sunday Services 10am Morning Worship 5.30pm Evening Worship

The Roman Catholic Chapel TN17 4EL

Fr Barry Grant 713364 www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org

Masses 9am Sundays 7.30pm Holy Days

From the Parish Registers

Funerals 12 October Sally Moore Funeral Charing Crematorium
15 October "Lixi" Cook Interment

Rector's Letter



The real reason for remembrance

“Remember, remember the fifth of November,
Gunpowder, treason and plot
We know no reason why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.”

So goes the anonymous 17th-century rhyme; the first part of which is probably well known, the second part perhaps not so. We, of course, use it to remember bonfire night and fireworks and, if you're old enough, 'penny for the guy'. Every year we gather round a huge bonfire in the Glebe, burn a guy and watch lovely fireworks. What we are 'remembering' is a treasonous plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament, to remove King James I from the throne and restore a Catholic monarchy. But we've forgotten that part and gather to have a good time together.

Huge numbers of people were killed for their religious beliefs in the times of a power struggle between the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. What we should be remembering is a dark time in our history, and that people paid for their religious belief with their lives; that is the reason we should never forget.

November is definitely a month for remembering. When we are remembering events where people gave their lives, we do so out of respect for them. (Respect: remember my letter reflecting upon this last month? Respect is about having consideration for the thoughts and life of another human being. It is about being thoughtful and attentive to their needs rather than always thinking about our own.) Perhaps that should be on our minds when we gather, on a number of occasions in November, as community to remember men and women who have lived their lives before us and who have died?

St George's Church will be a focal point for the community to gather in on a number of occasions this month to remember. On Friday 2 November there is a service formally entitled The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed - All Souls' Day; a time to remember, together, loved ones who have died by whatever cause, whether recent or in the distant past. Remembering all that they meant to us and all that they brought to our lives. A time to say, together, "thank you" for that person being a part of our life. Over the weekend of 9-11 November we'll meet several times as community to remember those killed as a result of war; it's made all the more poignant this year as we mark the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. On Sunday 11 November we will gather, in church, for a service and Act of Remembrance in the morning; we will gather again at the war memorial; we will gather again in church, in the evening, as we commemorate the passing of 100 years since the end of the 'war to end all wars'.

Oh that we could remember that, and learn from it - out of respect for the millions, on both sides, who were killed.

Revd David Commander, Rector



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Just a Thought



Undying memories

The old man sat in an armchair with a warm blanket over his knees. He had turned the radio to the Home Service so that he and his wife could listen to the Remembrance Day service coming from the Cenotaph. As the band played, pictures thrust themselves before him - the guns, the tanks, the mud, the wire, the cold, more mud, the intense fear, yet more mud and the mustard gas. Then there was the noise - always the noise - the whine of mortar shells, the machine guns, sickening explosions, the screams of his compatriots. But he had survived.

As the service moved on he turned to where he knew his wife sat and sighed with deep love and gratitude. With the help of this girl, who had waited for him, he picked himself up and buried the war memories deep. The people of St Dunstan's in Brighton had trained him to make his own way. Since then, besides his job, he had worked tirelessly for improvement in the conditions of ordinary men, some of whose faces he could see now - George, Maurice, 'Snapper', Ernie, Cyril, Archie ...

Even in his early nineties the old sea captain stood tall and straight as the flag bearers and servicemen marched towards the Merchant Navy Memorial in Trinity Square Gardens on London's Tower Hill. Sailing had been his life. A deckhand in World War I, he captained two ships during World War II. As the sun shone bright he remembered that it had been the end of just such a day when his first ship was torpedoed. The U-boat had come out of nowhere. He shuddered despite the sun, as memories of the cold, oil-covered water closing over him, returned. Then there were the noises of countless explosions; fighter planes overhead; the cries of his men and the sight of his ship going down - oh so quickly.

After the war he remained under the Red Ensign. It was hard. He went on to marry and have a family but was away from his children for two years at a time. So much happens in two years. Now he was proud that the first Merchant Navy Day had been established, even if it had taken until 2000, and he was there, remembering his comrades who didn't come home - Charles, William, Ken, 'Kipper' ...

Inspired by her grandfather's actions as a medic on the Dunkirk beaches, the young woman had gone into medicine. But she had always wanted to fly and so she joined the RAF's Medical Emergency Response Team. On call, always ready to respond to the urgent request to fly in, extract hideously wounded soldiers, give medical attention and comfort to the terrified faces and bring them through the firing zone to safety.

Now, four years later, she had a new life, a new job and a new leg. But the memory of her last mission still haunted her and, as she waited by the memorial in Royal Wootton Bassett, she thought of those who were not there with her - Josh, 'Lanky', Hamid ...

Sue Fisher

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News and Events

New school build to begin this month

Barring an untimely act of God, the new primary school in Benenden should soon take its first physical steps towards fruition, according to documents from Kent County Council laying out the timetable for the works. The good news is that the build by main contractor Kier Construction should begin this month after the discharge of Condition 14 (details of Code of Construction practice) of the application TW/17/3344, with completion expected in readiness for the new school year in 2019. The following are the edited highlights:

“The building is to be constructed using traditional construction methods over a steel portal frame. It is planned that all topsoil and subsoil is retained on site by adjusting the finished levels or spreading surplus materials on the Client’s land. This measure means that the vehicle movements to and from the site will be kept to a minimum. The fact that the soil is not to be removed from site will also assist in reducing the risk of mud being taken onto the local roads.

“The works are planned to commence mid-November 2018 and be complete to enable the school to install their fixtures and fittings at the start of August 2019. It is proposed that the new school will open for pupils in September 2019.

“Deliveries of plant and materials will take place only between the hours of 08.00 and 18.00 Monday to

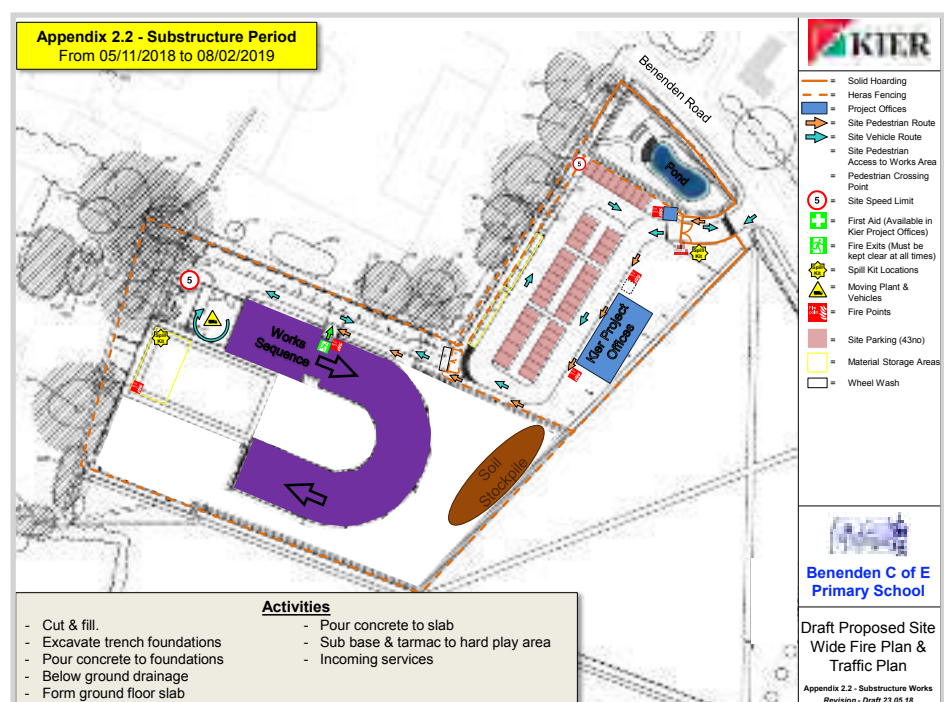
Friday, and 08.00 to 13.00 on a Saturday.

There will be no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays. During the term times when children will be travelling to school, deliveries will be restricted to hours outside of 08.30 to 09.30, and 14.30 to 15.30. There is currently a crossover at the location of the new school entrance. This was built as part of the enabling works and will be utilised during this construction.

“Once the foundations and drainage are complete, the steel frame will be erected using a mobile crane. It is envisaged that the crane will erect the building from one or two locations in the centre of the building. Once the steel frame is built, then works to the roof and superstructure can start.

“Advance signs of work commencement will be erected on the Benenden Road at least two weeks before the work is due to commence. Letter drops to properties near the works will be delivered also in advance of the works commencement as instructed by the Client.”

Watch that space and follow the progress of a new landmark for the village.





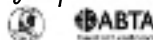
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- * To reduce congestion, please allow time to walk or car share if you can. If you do drive please park considerately.
- * No personal sparklers or fireworks.
- * Benenden Bonfire Society are avoiding single use plastic products. Once existing stock is depleted, our aim is to use biodegradable, compostable, eco plastic items.

Tickets available: **www.benendenfireworks.co.uk**
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Gates open 5.30pm Bonfire 6.30pm Fireworks 7pm

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The Friends of St George's Church



Quiz Night


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7.15 for 7.30pm
Benenden Village Hall

Tables of 8
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Gourmet Pie Supper

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deborahjenkins26@btinternet.com 01580 241878



Tom Bell

ORGAN RECITAL

Sunday 4 November 2018
St George's Church, Benenden
6pm
following Choral Evensong at 5pm

Arnold Cole Trust

The Arnold Cole Trust would like to invite applications for its annual disbursements from those clubs and societies within the parish of Benenden in need of funds. Dr Arnold Cole was GP in Benenden from 1930 until his death in 1960. His daughter, Joan Weston, set up the Trust in 1968. The aim of the Trust is to apply its income for the "general benefit for the parish of Benenden, with special consideration being given to the elderly and young."

All applications in writing please to:
The Secretary, Arnold Cole Trust,
Scribbins, Benenden, Kent TN17 4DT.

Please note applications must be received no later than 30 November 2018.

Steve Robinson, Secretary, ACT

All Souls' Day service

Friday 2 November, St George's Church,
7.30pm

If you would like the name of a loved one read out in this reflective service please let Revd David know. Refreshments will be available for a time of fellowship from 7pm.
Revd David Commander, Rector 240658
revdavidcommander@gmail.com

JUNIOR TENNIS COACHING

Iden Green Tennis Club is now offering tennis coaching for Junior Members on Fridays during Term Time.

 Who: Club Members of 6-18 years

 Where: Floodlit Courts at Benenden School

 When: Friday Term Time groups from 4.30pm onwards

 How much: £4 per session until Easter 2019

 **Free Taster Session: 9 November 2018**

Contact for further details:
eleanor.cochrane@btinternet.com

Iden Green Tennis Club junior membership is £20 per year.

Keeping it clean

A reminder for those who like to see Benenden spick and span: the annual Autumn Village Clean takes place on Saturday 10 November. Anybody who is handy with a litter picker and a black sack should meet outside the community shop or Iden Green Pavilion between 9 and 9.30am to be kitted out with a regulation visi-vest and all necessary equipment.

By way of thanks, all volunteers will receive a voucher for a drink and cake to be used at Benenden's Café afterwards.



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Friday 9 November 🌸 Benenden Village Hall

Doors 7pm Film 7.30pm

Tickets free from Benenden's Community Shop (available for village residents only)

THE TRENCH FOOT REVUE

Saturday 10 November 🌸 Benenden Village Hall

Doors open 6.30pm

Show starts at 19.14 and it will all be over by Christmas!

As the clouds gathered over Europe, vaudeville helped lift the spirits of soldiers on leave and their families waiting back home.

Come and enjoy comedy and songs from the time.

Cabaret style seating. Bring nibbles if you wish, but no drinks as there is a bar on site.

Tickets £3 from Benenden's Community Shop

All profits to ABF The Soldiers' Charity

THE REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

Sunday 11 November 🌸 St George's Church

10.45am

THE LAYING OF WREATHS

Sunday 11 November 🌸 War Memorial

11.45am-12noon

COMMEMORATION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WWI

Sunday 11 November 🌸 St George's Church

5.30pm

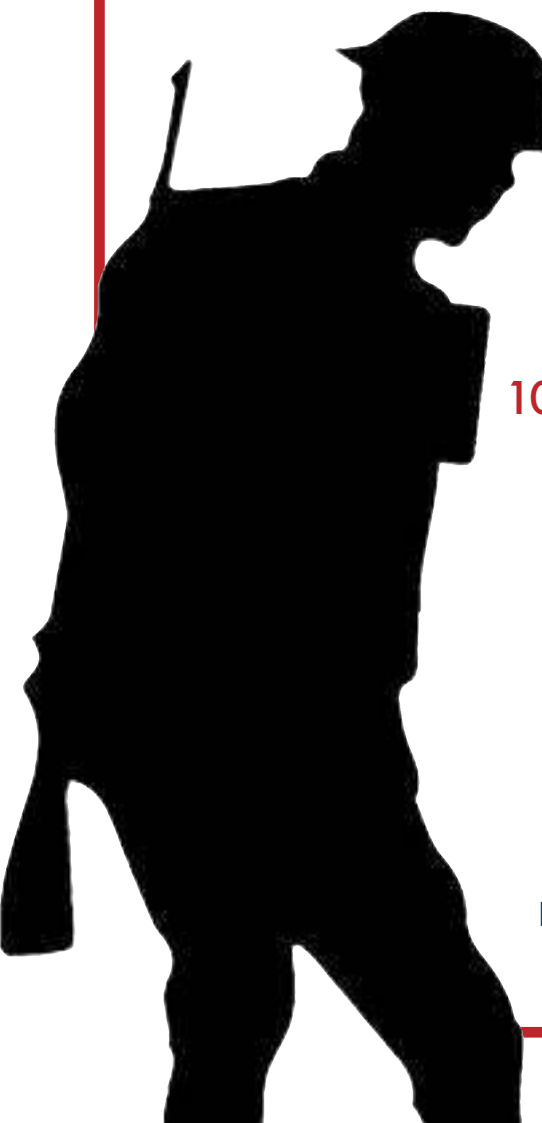
Please be seated by 5.15pm

6.55pm The Last Post

7pm Lighting of the village beacon
symbolising an end to the darkness of war

7.05pm Church bells ringing out for peace

Bring wellies, torches and something warm to go outside in
to gather for the lighting of the beacon on the Glebe Field



Benenden and the Great War

As the village prepares to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I, Robin Dalton Holmes pays tribute to the 32 men of Benenden who lost their lives in the conflict.



Captain Harold
Alfred Vyvan
Harmsworth, MC

The men of Benenden were a close-knit group who knew each other well and, linked to large estates, volunteered to soldier together and had perhaps hoped to be home by Christmas 1914. Instead they suffered and died together, either near Ypres, on the Somme, or in Iraq. As most of us are too young to have direct experience of the World Wars, it is appropriate at this time, 100 years after the armistice was signed at Compiègne in Picardie, to remember the great hardship and sacrifices made by those who left Benenden and never returned.

The shelling of Belgrade on 28 July, 1914 led, by degrees, to dragging in the countries of Europe. The German invasion of Belgium forced French involvement in early August and Britain joined the conflict on 12 August. From early that month the local landowners and their agents encouraged those not already in the Territorial Army to enlist. Before legal conscription, in 1916, 150 parishioners joined - mainly the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment (RWKR), which was enlarged to seven battalions, and the Buffs (East Kent Regiment) to 11 battalions.

Of the 32 from our parish who lost their lives, 17 shared a common ancestor in the Rootes family: Edward, born in Benenden in 1845, had a son William, who ran a small engineering concern in Goudhurst and grew it in Hawkhurst. His son William, born in Goudhurst, grew it again in Maidstone, repairing aero-engines, and ultimately ran the Rootes Motor Group in Coventry. He later became the 1st Baron Rootes. By marriage or descent, those linked were the Bridgland, Burt, Coley, Couchman, Harmer, Humphrey, Jenner, Marshall, Matthews, Pavey, Roff, Taylor, Weeks and Worsley families.

BENENDEN LOST:

William Frank Gardiner Baird

born 1885, son of Sir William Baird, Bt. of Edinburgh and Arabella Hozier a kinswoman of Sir Winston Churchill's wife. Originally a Captain in the 7th Dragoon Guards, he married Violet Croft, whose sister had married a member of the Hoare family. Living at the Paper Mill on the Tongswood estate, he enlisted on 11 August, 1914 into the Bedfordshire Regt. and, attached to the Lincolnshire Regt. and was wounded at Neuve-Chapelle on 27 October, 1914 and died, a captain aged 28, on 5 November, leaving a widow and three children.



Captain William Frank
Gardiner Baird

George Thomas Boxall born in 1895, son of George Boxall, foreman bricklayer of the Hemsted estate, and Mary Boxall, enlisted in Surrey and became a corporal in the 7th Bn. East Surrey Regt. He died on 9 April, 1917, aged 22, and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial.

Harry Bridgland born in 1890 at Hague Cottages, Iden Green, son of Harry Bridgland (an agricultural labourer and bricklayer) and Harriett Humphrey. He enlisted in Cranbrook in the 1st Bn. the Buffs and was killed in the Somme offensive near Guillemont on 15 September, 1916, as a lance corporal aged 26.

Vincent Bridgland his brother, was born in 1896 at Claremont Place, Iden Green. He enlisted in 5th Bn. and transferred to the 2/4th Bn. RWKR. He died in the third battle of Gaza on 4 November, 1917, as a private aged 21, and is commemorated on the Jerusalem War Memorial.



Driver Archibald Burt

Archibald Burt was born at 4 Laurel Cottages, The Street in 1898, the son of Tom Burt (a grocer's assistant) and Emma Gentle. He enlisted, under age, with the Buffs in 1914 and served in Gallipoli and the Somme before being sent home until his 18th birthday. He was a driver with the 227th Brigade Royal Field Artillery, and was killed at Villers-Bretonneux on 31 March, 1918, aged 20. He was buried at the Adelaide Cemetery nearby.

Robert John Burt born in 1898 in Hastings, the son of Alfred Burt, head gardener at Hemsted, and Rosa Burnger, living at Staplehurst Lodge. He enlisted in the 14th Bn. Royal Irish Rifles in Cranbrook in 1916. Sappers had dug long tunnels under German lines in order to explode 19 massive mines, simultaneously killing 10,000 enemy troops. Tragically 41 tons of high explosive were detonated a little late at Spanbroekmolen. His battalion had started to advance, and was caught in the blast, which was reportedly heard in London and made a crater 129 metres in diameter. He died, aged 19, on 7 June, 1917 and is buried in the tiny Lone Tree cemetery beside a farm across the road.

William Elmer Reymes-Cole DSO was born in Belgium in 1864, son of Thomas Elmer Cole (a farmer in Cambridgeshire) and Anne Reymes. After time in the Colonial Service he enlisted in the Royal Munster Fusiliers to take part in the Boer War. Before rejoining his regiment as a captain in May 1914, he was briefly land agent for the Hemsted estate, living at Twysden Place, Scullsgate. He was killed in action aged 50, on 11 November, 1914 and buried in the New Irish Cemetery at Ypres.



Captain William Elmer Reymes-Cole, DSO

Albert Sackville Cresswell was born in 1878 in Wiltshire, the son of Charles Cresswell (a broker) and Phoebe Cresswell. He also served in the Boer War. He was land agent to the Hole Park estate, living at Beacon Hill, joined the TA and became adjutant of the 3rd Bn. the Buffs in 1912. He was shot by a sniper on 12 March, 1915 at St Eloi, aged 36, and buried at the Kemmel Chateau Cemetery at Ypres.



Captain Alfred Ernest Sackville Cresswell

Richard Edward Coley DCM was born in 1878 in Chapel Lane, Iden Green, son of Edward Coley (agricultural worker) and Theodosia Austen. He was married and living in Dover when he enlisted in the 24th Siege Battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery in 1914. Aged 38 he was wounded on the Somme on 22 September, 1916. He died six days later and was buried at Heilly Station Cemetery nearby.

Sidney Coley an agricultural worker, was born in 1891 at Apple Pie Farm, son of Henry Coley (agriculture worker) and Phoebe Coley. A private in the 11th Bn. the Royal Sussex Regt, he died aged 25 on 21 October, 1916 and was buried at the same cemetery as his cousin.

George Frederick Couchman was born in 1897 at Corner Cottages, Cranbrook Road, the son of Charles Couchman (a cattle stockman) and Sally Coley. He was a vanner on the Hemsted estate and enlisted in May 1916 into the Middlesex Regt., in whose service he was wounded and sent home twice. After transfer to the Royal West Surrey Regt. he died aged 20 on 21 March, 1918. As his remains were never recovered he was commemorated on the Pozieres Memorial near to Thiepval on the Somme.

Alfred Foster was born in 1898 in St Leonards, son of Jonas and Frances Foster of Worth, East Sussex. He enlisted at Benenden in the Buffs and was reposted to the London Regt. 3rd Bn. Royal Fusiliers attached to the 23rd Bn. He died aged 20 on 23 March 1918 and is commemorated on the Arras Memorial on the Somme.

Herbert Edwin Harmer was born in July 1890 in Iden Green the son of Charles Harmer (an estate carpenter) and Hannah Phillis. He enlisted in Hertford, where he was a gardener, in September 1915 into the 1st Bn. the Hertfordshire Regt. He died, a private, on 30 July, 1916 aged 26, near Loos, Pas de Calais and is commemorated on the memorial there. ➔



Captain Harold Alfred Vyvyan Harmsworth, MC

Harold Alfred Vyvyan St George Harmsworth MC was born in 1894 in Hampstead, London, the eldest son of Harold Harmsworth (who was the founder of the Daily Mail, the Daily Mirror and the Evening News later becoming the 1st Viscount Rothermere of Hemsted) and Mary Share. At the end of his first undergraduate year at Christ Church, Oxford University, he enlisted in the Irish Guards.

As a captain he was wounded in November 1917 and repatriated. He died aged 23 in London on 12 February, 1918 and was buried in Hampstead Cemetery. In response to his dying words - "Buy my friends a drink" - his family provided a fund for all members of his regiment to enjoy a drink once a year and this still continues.

Vere Sydney Tudor Harmsworth

his younger brother, was born in 1895 at Eastbourne. He joined the Royal Navy as a Dartmouth cadet but was later deafened by gunfire and retired. He enlisted into the RNVR in October 1914 as a sub lieutenant in their land forces. He

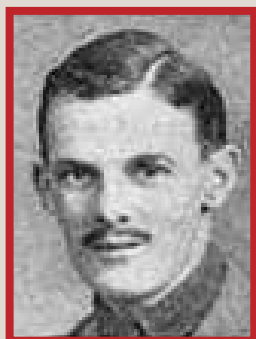


Lieutenant (RN) Vere Sydney Tudor Harmsworth

was captured and escaped at Antwerp and later served in Gallipoli. He was killed aged 21 in action near the Ancre River on 13 November, 1916 and buried at Beaumont-Hamel on the Somme.

Richard Lennard Hoare was born in Iden Manor, Staplehurst in 1881, the son of William Hoare and Laura Lennard of Summerhill, Standen Street.

The Hoare family had founded the private bank C Hoare & Co, which still operates in Fleet Street, London, in 1672. He was commissioned from Sandhurst into the RWKR, from which he resigned to work in London. He re-enlisted into 12th Bn. of the County of London Regt. - the Rangers, a TA regiment. He was killed aged 33 at Gommecourt on 1 July, 1916, the first day of the Somme offensive, commanding a company which had previously been led by a cousin, killed in 1915. On that day 20,000 British



Captain Richard Lennard Hoare

soldiers died. The wooden cross which marked his temporary grave before his burial at Gommecourt hangs in Benenden church. He was related to Captain Baird.

William Albert Humphrey was born in 1893 the son of Albert Humphrey (an agricultural worker) and Emmeline Busbridge in Chapel Lane, Iden Green. He enlisted at Canterbury into the RWKR and died aged 24 on 26 October, 1917 near Ypres. He is commemorated, along with 34,887 whose bodies were never found but were presumed to have died in the last 15 months of the war, near Ypres, on the wall at Tyne Cot Cemetery, which contains almost 12,000 formal graves.

George Jenner was born in 1890 in Hague Cottages, Iden Green, the son of John Jenner (a farm waggoner) and Mary Humphrey. He was a gardener at Angley Park, Cranbrook when he joined the 5th Territorial Bn. of the Buffs in 1911, as a private. Mobilised in 1914 he died aged 27 of heatstroke on 9 July, 1916 in Mesopotamia and was buried at the Basra Cemetery, Iraq.



Private George Jenner

Francis John Marshall was born in Iden Green, the son of William Marshall (village postman) and Laura Judge. He became an under-keeper at Glassenbury Park, Cranbrook and enlisted in November 1915 into the 6th Bn. the Buffs. He died, aged 19, a private, on 3 July, 1916 early in the Somme offensive and is buried at the Lonsdale Cemetery, Authuille near to Thiepval.

Benjamin Matthews was born in 1884 at Moorwood, Iden Green, the son of Benjamin Matthews (agricultural worker) and Mary Matthews of Holly Cottage, Dingleliden. He enlisted at Cranbrook into the 1st Bn. the Northamptonshire Regt. and died on 16 August, 1918, a private, aged 34. Like all 72,085 casualties on the Somme with no known grave, he is commemorated on the massive Thiepval Memorial, built in the countryside near Albert, the French having declined a British request for another town memorial at St Quentin like the Menin Gate in Ypres.

Thomas Matthews his brother, was born in Dingleliden in 1883. He was a bricklayer living with his parents at Holly Cottage and joined the same regiment as his brother, also a private. In 1916 he married Agnes Matthews at Faversham and died, aged 33, on 20 August, 1916, before the birth of his daughter. He, too, is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial.

Percy Moore was born in 1897 at Crabtree, close to Hemsted, the son of Frank Moore (an estate gamekeeper) and Fanny Maynard. He was a gardener at the Paper Mill for Captain Baird (q.v.) and joined the 6th Bn. the Buffs as a territorial in February 1914. He was posted missing on 3 May, 1917 as a corporal aged 20 and later buried at the Arras Road Cemetery at Roclincourt.



Private Albert Victor Pavey

Albert Victor Pavey was one of five sons of Richard Pavey (an estate carpenter) and Elizabeth Coley. Born in 1897 he was a porter at Gammon & Sons in Cranbrook when on 10 August, 1914 he enlisted into the 5th Bn. the Buffs. He died, a private, in Kut, Mesopotamia on 16 January, 1916 aged 18, and is commemorated on the Basra Memorial, Iraq.



Sergeant Richard Edward George Pavey, DCM

Richard Edward George Pavey DCM was born in 1891, in Iden Green like his brothers. He was living in Cranbrook where in 1914 he enlisted into the 29th Trench Mortar Battery, Royal Field Artillery. As a sergeant he was wounded on 6 July, 1917, died a day later aged 26, and was buried at the Mendinghem Cemetery at Poperinge, West Flanders, Belgium.



Private Arthur Stanley Pavey

Arthur Stanley Pavey was born in 1895. He worked with farm horses and together with his brothers enlisted on 10 August, 1914 in Cranbrook. After posting to the Essex Regiment, he joined the 11th Bn. RWKR and was killed in Flanders on 31 July, 1917, a private, aged 22. He is listed with 54,896 allied soldiers killed in Flanders before August 1917 who have no known graves, on the Menin Gate, near the centre of Ypres in Belgium, where at 8pm every evening the fire brigade still sounds the traditional bugle calls in commemoration of the war dead.

William Roff was born in 1894 son of George Roff (estate worker) and Mary Stone of Diprose Farm, Benenden. He worked on the estate until in 1912 he enlisted into the 8th Bn. the Buffs. In November 1916, on leave, he married Mary Osbourne at Goudhurst but died of wounds as a private, aged 23, on 10 August, 1917 and was buried at the Brandhoek Cemetery at Ypres.

Charles Edward Russell was born in 1898 in Biddenden, the son of John Russell (a waggoner on the Hemsted Estate) and Sarah Croucher, later of Harman's Cottage, Pullington Farm. He was a boy gardener to Captain Cresswell (q.v.) at Beacon Hill and, under age, enlisted in Benenden on 10 August, 1914 into 5th Bn. the Buffs. He died, aged 17, in Mesopotamia on 7 January, 1916 and is also commemorated on the Basra Memorial, Iraq.

James Alfred Taylor was born in Iden Green in 1884, son of James Taylor (an agricultural worker), who died in 1896, and Adelaide Drury, who later married Edgar Austen of Spring Cottage, Causton Wood, Standen Street. He married Louisa Harriett of Cavenham, Suffolk in 1908 and left one son. He worked in agriculture and later, as a gardener in Westerham, enlisted in Suffolk, died a private aged 33, on 10 May, 1917 and was buried at the Feuchy Chapel Cemetery, near Arras.

Ernest Watson was born in Barrack Row, Benenden in 1892, son of Walter Watson (a cattle herdsman) and Kate Timson. He was apprenticed as a carpenter and with friends enlisted in Cranbrook on 10 August, 1914 in 5th Bn. the Buffs. He died on 8 February, 1915, a lance corporal aged 23, and is buried in the Bedford House Cemetery just south of Ypres.

John Watson his brother, was born at St Nicholas-at-Wade in 1886. He enlisted in Canterbury into 1st Bn. the Buffs in 1908 and was in Singapore in 1911. He left the army in 1913 to join the police. In 1914, after rejoining the Buffs, he transferred to the Royal Military Police. Wounded in France, he returned to convalesce in Benenden, died aged 31, a lance corporal on 21 August, 1917 and was buried in the Benenden churchyard.



Private William Weeks

George William Weeks was born at Catsford Farm, Dingleton in 1895, son of George Weeks (an agricultural worker) and Esther Dunster, both of whom predeceased him. He was an agricultural worker who enlisted in Tenterden in the 5th Bn. the Buffs in 1914, later transferring to the 6th Bn. He died, a private, on 30 November, 1917 aged 22,

and is buried at Villers-Guislain in the Nord district of France.

Cyril Wilfred Worsley was born in 1896 at Chittenden Cottages, Golford Road, son of William Worsley (an agricultural worker) and Ellen Smith. He worked as a waggoner's mate until he enlisted in Cranbrook, in August 1914, into 5th Bn. the Buffs. He died a private, aged 20, in Mesopotamia on 9th March, 1917 and is commemorated on the Basra Memorial, Iraq. →

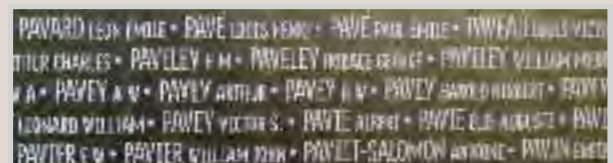


→ The youngest of the three Harmsworth brothers, Esmond, served in the Royal Marine Artillery. He was ADC to Prime Minister Lloyd-George at the peace conference at Versailles and later became an MP. On 27 February, 1921 he unveiled the Benenden War Memorial, which his family had

commissioned based on a similar sculpture by Albert Toft, depicting a grieving mother, on the Cardiff City Boer War Memorial. Mrs Pavey mother of three sons, who did not return, stands waiting to lay her wreath.



On 11 November, 2014, a 345-metre ring, listing in alphabetical order the names of all of the 579,606 casualties of both sides in France, was inaugurated at the French National Memorial Cemetery of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette in the Somme.



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Neighbourhood Development Plan

Shaping our policies: residents offer their views

On 29 September the Neighbourhood Planning Team updated the parish through a second exhibition, held at Iden Green Pavilion and attended by 97 people, including residents, landowners and a senior member of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's planning team.

One question raised there covered a rather important issue concerning future housing developments: why are the Steering Group looking only at the sites suggested by TWBC? Surely we should be proposing the sites the village wants (i.e. small) rather than being led by TWBC.

This is a complex matter and we are still struggling to make sure the approach we take in our plan achieves the best balance. I will try here to set out differing aspects.

First, as explained at the exhibition, the 2017 Neighbourhood Planning Act builds upon the Localism Act of 2012 and gives Neighbourhood Plans influence and some power. But we are obliged to fall in line with national and borough policies. So it is impossible to ignore TWBC policy, although we can influence how that policy is applied.

Secondly, the size and number of sites made available. We can look only at sites that landowners have offered. The TWBC Call for Sites yielded 20 potential locations, of which 15 were larger than one hectare, and five smaller. Of the five smaller sites only two are deemed suitable for development (and these offer space for just eight dwellings in total). The others would have a significant impact on the character and views across the High Weald.

Thirdly, TWBC are obliged by the 2012 Act to develop a plan with commercially viable sites that will enable developers to deliver each scheme within the plan timeframe. Sites with very few houses will not be regarded as commercially viable.

During our early workshops it became clear residents would like scattered development across the parish, although the Parish Plan 2015

actually suggested clusters of development in enclaves within village envelopes.

Residents also wanted to retain the existing village feel. Housing density in the parish varies but the average density in Benenden 'core village' is currently ten dwellings per hectare. Our ambition is to target an average density of 12.5 dph in new sites; this would avoid an urban feel to the housing, and provide green spaces and sufficient off-street parking.

At workshops, residents wanted a good proportion of affordable housing, which also featured in the Parish Plan. To deliver affordable housing, each site must provide a minimum of 12 dwellings, 35% of which will then be 'affordable'. To put this into context, the Rydon Homes site in Walkhurst Road was approved for 12 dwellings, including four affordable homes at a density of 17 dph, the higher density being a compromise so the developer could deliver 25% affordable on a site with space for only 12 homes. So to meet our target of 100 new dwellings and ensure we provide a proportion of affordable houses we would need eight sites each with around 12-14 units; but we do not have eight small sites available, we have two and a number of larger sites.

We could scatter development using the two small sites, and partly develop at least seven others, but partial development will reduce the commercial viability of each site, risking rejection of our plan by TWBC on grounds with which the independent examiner would agree. Part development also presents a significant risk that the rest of the site will be developed in future years. Without clear and robust boundaries, any undeveloped part of the site will present the →





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→ developer/owner with an opportunity to extend, bypassing our plan via an appeals process.

So we are also considering a few medium sized sites, containing 20-50 dwellings but at a density that allows room for new residents to enjoy their rural location, providing adequate off-street parking and, through good landscaping, making sure the impact is as sympathetic as possible. The two smallest sites could be supported, as a way of providing a degree of dispersal and reducing the dwellings targeted on the medium-sized sites.

This is a difficult problem, one where there is no perfect answer and which requires compromise and cooperation across the board. We would be very keen to hear alternate suggestions or constructive solutions.

Email benenden.n.p@btinternet.com

Paul Tolhurst

Chair Benenden NDP Steering Committee

Sites and sounds from the NDP update

It was great to see so many people at the village update at the Iden Green Pavilion on 29 September. For all the groups involved in the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) it was encouraging that so many people attended and wanted to know about the work that had been done since the last consultation in April. For the Housing Supply Group this was an opportunity to show the parish not only the research, negotiation with TWBC on numbers - now reduced from 218 to 101 - and documentation required in the NDP but also the sifting process they have been undertaking, objectively assessing all the sites and coming up with a longlist and, more recently, a shortlist.

The process is not over yet; half a dozen late sites have been submitted in the last few weeks, and more may come in before the process comes to a close. The Housing Supply Group has to assess these and add them to the information sheets, known as SHELAAs, on the original 17 submissions. In assessing the sites the Housing

Supply Group has, among other things, had to consider the government's new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which emphasises that new housing must be sustainable and economically viable. In addition the protection afforded to the AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and conservation areas (Benenden and Iden Green) has to be taken into account. In the last few weeks we have been incorporating important environmental information and impact assessments into our SHELAAs. Given that almost the whole parish is in the AONB, with a number of important Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) scattered across it, it is perhaps a question of choosing the least worst option. Maintaining the rural nature of the parish and its preservation was the



strongest feeling that people expressed to us, making it our number one objective.

So how do you square that with a developer building a substantial group of houses somewhere in the parish? If we limit the number of sites, that will lessen the impact on the AONB by restricting development to those sites but the number of houses on each will be greater. The Housing Supply Group has been looking at a number of alternative dispersed or semi-dispersed options, weighing up which would make the least impact on the AONB while at the same time being economically viable and producing the types of housing that the parish has said it wants: affordable housing, retirement homes, family houses and somewhere you can work and live.

The NDP also allows us to write site-specific policies which can strongly influence how →

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We got the impression at the village update that the parish would support Site 277 (Feoffee), despite the fact that it is in the AONB and adjacent to the conservation area, specifically because it is a scheme which delivers the types of housing that the parish has stated that it wants. It is affordable housing, is locally led and cannot be sold off.

→ buildings are arranged and what they are built in, at what density, how they might be screened and how to minimise their impact. The design and aesthetic characteristics of housing in each part of the parish has been mapped by the Housing Design Group with the intention that this data can be used to help shape development. Site-specific policies are what we are working on drafting now.

Some people wanted to know why we had to have any development at all and why we were kowtowing to TWBC. We're not! But we do realise that the Government is pressuring the Borough to build a large number of houses, and if they don't have threatened to take over and force development themselves, giving us no say at all in where or what we get. Other people were keen to know why it was not possible to have the scattered development that most of us were keen on at the start of this process and a number of reasons are set out in Paul Tolhurst's article on page 23.

TWBC has indicated a preference for sites which are close to amenities, such as the primary school, the pub and the village shop, or previously developed land, as this accords with the Government's NPPF. There are good reasons to endorse TWBC's suggestions, firstly because these are likely to be sites that scored highly on our own independent scoring system but, perhaps more importantly, because if our NDP is in agreement with TWBC's Local Plan then we have some protection against random speculative development. In fact, they have undertaken to protect us against speculative applications up to and including appeal.

Two thirds of the dwellings will be affordable housing, run and managed by the Almshouse Trust; it will be available to all age groups and can never be sold. The remaining one third will be ordinary market housing sold to enable the Trust to fund the remainder. Other smaller sites which provide a specific type of housing such as work/live units or retirement houses should perhaps also be considered for inclusion in order to provide the parish with the range of housing types it needs.

So the NDP is still very much a work in progress with much still to be looked at before the draft plan goes to the Parish Council for their consideration in December. New sites may still come on board and other sites amended or the boundaries changed. All of these will be subject to the same scrutiny as the existing submitted sites until the NDP is published next year. There will be two periods of examination of the draft plan during which anyone can make representations and the plan itself will be looked at by an independent examiner. Now is your chance to contribute constructively to the formulation of the NDP. If you would like to let us have your suggestions or opinions please email to benenden.n.p@btinternet.com
Housing Supply Working Group
www.benendenneighbourhoodplan.org



MEET YOUR MP Helen Grant

Helen Grant, MP for Maidstone and the Weald, holds regular surgeries around the constituency. If you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss an issue of concern to you, please e-mail Helen at helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk or telephone **020 7219 7107**.

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



1:1

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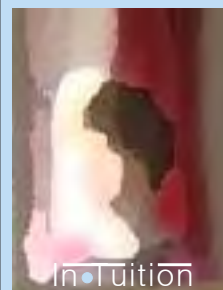
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Iden Green and Benenden WI

The last speaker of the year was a young man from the photographic department of the BBC. As he has worked there since he left school, the changes in technique from manual to digital provided a lesson in technical history. We were also shown how a good still can show a story, more than a film on the same subject.

We were sorry to say goodbye to Ann Dann and Liz Spicer, both of whom have been very loyal members of the WI. Some of us went to Great Dixter to see the Autumn Garden, as well as visit the house. The weather was kind, so an enjoyable time was had by all.

Dates to remember:

Tuesday 20 November, Christmas Party,
Memorial Hall, 2-4 pm
Shirley Fidler, President 752232

Obituary: Cyril Ivor Cooling

Cyril Cooling, a pioneer in the treatment of cancer who lived in the village and worked at Benenden Hospital, has died aged 95 at Cradlehall Care Home in Inverness, Scotland. He and his wife Phyllis - who passed away in 2016, the year of their platinum wedding anniversary - spent many years together in Benenden and later Tenterden, having moved to the area from Sutton in Surrey.

A respected surgeon, Cyril was also a member of the Benenden Players and a regular attendee at St George's Church, having worked for many years at the Royal Marsden Hospital. The couple moved back to Sutton in 2005 and joined their son at his home in Inverness in 2010.

Cyril, who leaves four children, 12 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren, passed away on August 18 and was cremated in Inverness. Donations may be made to the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity via <https://cyril-cooling.muchloved.com/>, or directly by post to Royal Marsden Hospital Charity, Fulham Road, London SW3 6JJ.

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Tawny Owl survey - volunteers needed

In last month's magazine, I mentioned the fact that Tawny Owls are difficult to survey due to their nocturnal habits. The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) is carrying out a survey this winter and asking for volunteers. It will take just 20 minutes and can be undertaken from your bed with the window open - between sunset and midnight in any one week until end of March 2019. You can do as many weeks as you like, the more the better and you can do more locations if you feel like it.

The data is then entered on-line at bto.org/volunteer-surveys/project-owl/tawny-owl-calling-survey. You will be asked to fill in date, time, location and cloud cover. You will need to register for the survey at the above address. If you hear an owl outside the survey times this can be entered at a later date. All you need in skill levels is to recognise the tweets and hoots of the owls themselves. There are very few other noises at that time of night so it is quite an easy task. Like all surveys it is just as important to record no owls calling as it is to the actual calls you hear. If you are unsure on the calls there plenty of recordings one can listen on the internet. I would be very happy help potential volunteers if needed.

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News from Benenden School

The first month of term has been busy and thoroughly enjoyable. The new girls are now firmly settled in, and at the other end of the school our Six Twos have been submitting their UCAS applications. Also, the inaugural horse show that I mentioned in my last column was an enormous success and is an event we are keen to build on for future years.

There is much activity in the Drama Department at the moment as the younger pupils are busy rehearsing for our Lower School play, which this year is *Coram Boy*, while at the same time a company of girls are preparing to perform a 30-minute take on *Hamlet* in the Shakespeare Schools Festival in Tunbridge Wells. Both productions are being performed in November and we are very excited about them.

Last week we were delighted to welcome England netballer Eboni Beckford-Chambers, who was part of the team that memorably won Commonwealth Gold with a last-gasp victory over Australia earlier this year. Eboni spent the day coaching our netballers and it was an enormously valuable experience for them.

Eboni is one of several visitors to Benenden in the first few weeks of term. Two of our pupils organised an essay-writing competition and secured the honour of it being judged by world-renowned philosopher AC Grayling, who presented the winners with their prizes before delivering a fascinating and thought-provoking lecture. We have also welcomed leaders of two collaborative science projects, one of which is investigating the uses of ionic liquids and the other the colloidal stability of gold nanoparticles.

We have also been joined by Digital Awareness UK co-founder Charlotte Robertson, who spoke to girls and parents about how to balance teenagers' social media use, and journalist Rosie Garthwaite shared her experiences of reporting from conflicts in the Middle East.

We have launched our Friday afternoon timetable, where girls in all year groups take



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part in co-curricular activities. In total there are 18 different activities and this year the most popular option has been bushcraft, with more than 40 girls signing up to make the most of our woodland here. In addition, following the success of the microlight project, a group of girls have now begun constructing a Caterham 7 racing car.

Needless to say the girls - and staff - are looking forward to a well-deserved break at half term.

Samantha Price, Headmistress

Village Lunch

**Tuesday 20 November, Benenden Village
Hall, 12.30pm**

All are welcome. It's just £5 a head. If you need a lift please let us know and we can arrange it. Please call Sheila on 01580 240838, preferably by Friday 16 November, if you haven't already put your name down but would like to come. We would be very grateful if anyone coming to the lunch is able to pick up anyone who needs collecting.

Please note the Christmas Village Lunch is on Tuesday 4 December - instead of 18 December.

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Village Hall highlights

Cooling down but hotting up

Autumn is my favourite time of year. As a lass from 'oop North, I find summer down here too hot, so you'll never hear me complaining about frosty mornings and cold evenings. It is also my favourite time of year at the village hall. We have all our regulars back in full swing and Benenden Players are rehearsing for next year's pantomime. Weekends are crammed with charity events and WWI centenary evenings.

It really brings home just how much the hall is at the centre of our community and it's an absolute honour to be part of it. To see the hall full of hustle and bustle and being used for such a variety of activities is wonderful. Thank you to one and all for helping make it such a success.

As we're bursting at the seams, if you are thinking of holding a party then please do book asap so you or your little ones are not left disappointed. I'm already taking bookings for 2019 (and have had my first enquiry for 2020!).

For further information on events and classes check out either our Facebook page [@benendenvillagehall](https://www.facebook.com/benendenvillagehall) or go to:

www.benendenvillagehall.org

Lorraine Jones 243123

enquiries@benendenvillagehall.org

Talking Shop

Get your tickets here

November heralds a number of exciting activities in Benenden for which tickets can be bought in the shop: the village bonfire on Saturday 3 November, a showing of Oh! What a Lovely War on Friday 9 November and The Trench Foot Revue the following evening, featuring much local talent.

Our shop and café continue to do well with a constant stream of visitors. One who has recently become a regular is Les Smith, who previously lived in Benenden for four years and, after an absence from the village, is happy to have returned to such a cordial place in which to make friends.



Lastly, a reminder to all our lovely volunteers. We have a treat for you on Wednesday 31 October in the Memorial Hall at 7.30pm, where Hannah of Hannah's Garden will give a demonstration of how she makes her gorgeous Christmas wreaths, which will be sale in the shop. Anyone who volunteers, or who wants to sign up to volunteer, is welcome for drinks and nibbles.

Bev Beveridge



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Benenden Pre-School news

Once again, the year is flying by and we are already into our second term. This term is always one of the most exciting and hectic for the children as we build up to Christmas but before we start getting ahead of ourselves, there is still more seasonal fun to be had.

The annual autumn walk takes place in November, when all the pre-school children walk around their beautiful village and take in the colours of the season. Autumn is the best month for children to clearly see how nature can change so dramatically and the pre-school staff love seeing the children fully immersed in the leaf-kicking and puddle-jumping that this time of year brings.

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

Christmas Day lunch

Alone on Christmas Day? Please come and join us at the Memorial Hall for a lovely lunch, great company, a word from Her Majesty at 3pm and bonhomie of the highest order. The menu is simple, freshly produced and delicious. Salmon blinis and sausage rolls to start with as we meet and mingle from 12.30pm, then we sit down for turkey with all the trimmings, Christmas pudding or fruit salad, cheese, coffee and mince pies.

From 1 November, please sign up at the village shop. There is no charge, but if you would like to make a donation, it would be gratefully received on the day. Any profit and left over food will go to Catching Lives (www.catchinglives.org).

Please advise any eating allergies/ vegetarian/ vegan/ gluten free etc when booking. Any questions, please call Tracy Claridge on 240454. Any food donations for the lunch, please email:

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Dingleden reaps rewards of bumper Bacchus crop

I am always wary of the words 'best ever'. The Bordelais are famous, mostly every year, for declaring another 'Vintage of the Century', yet nature is such that one is lucky to get three good to great vintages every decade. So here we are in 2018, and the English and Welsh grape growers/wine producers are marvelling at the huge crop.

Kent-based Simpsons Wine Estate near Canterbury is expecting to harvest 200 tonnes of grapes this year, up from just 30 tonnes harvested in both 2017 and 2016. That is some jump, and it of course begs the question, does the winery have the tank capacity? What a nice problem to have.

Quantity does not of course mean quality, but if the grapes are sound and the winemakers apply their skills, then we are all in for a treat. In Bordeaux, less is more, we believe in reducing the yields to improve the concentration and avoid dilution. It's accepted that 2016 was a truly great vintage in Bordeaux, and while only time will tell if it turns out better than 2010 or 2005, the volume was truly amazing, the largest vintage since 2006, producing the equivalent of 770 million bottles.

At Dingleden, Graham Latter planted five acres of Bacchus in 2011 - Bacchus is probably the UK's largest still white grape variety and is most commonly made as a single varietal wine - and 2013 saw the first crop of two tonnes.

This year Graham produced 31 tonnes, a record crop of extremely healthy grapes over three full days from 19 September to 21 September. He normally sells all his grapes to a local winery, but this year has decided to vinify the equivalent of 732 bottles himself, with the helpful hand of four-time UKVA award-winning wine maker Owen Elias, thus making it the first Estate wine to be produced in Benenden.

Here Graham would like the community's

help. The wine will not be commercially available, but he is looking for a name and a label design for when he does release it commercially, so watch this space for further information - competition time folks! We await the finished article before proceeding.

Sour grapes?

A group of English winemakers has come together to call for a freeze on wine duty, which they argue is "excessively high" and unfairly restricting the industry's growth while damaging rural communities. Currently 55% of an average-priced bottle of wine sold in the off-trade is made up of tax and VAT. A planned 3.4% duty rise in this month's budget would add another 7p on a bottle of still wine, and 9p on a bottle of sparkling. "This action is necessary in order to support the ever-increasing demand for English wines and the growth of the industry in general," says Chris White, CEO of Denbies Wine Estate in Surrey.

Taste of Chile in the village

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at the forthcoming Chile wine tasting on Friday 23 November, which promises to be our best yet. Please sign up at the Community Shop.

In Vino Veritas.

Tracy Claridge

Peter Greet at Benenden School Café

Friday 23 November
7 for 7.30pm

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Above: Benenden Ordinary Dads Society's annual conker competition; Benenden School honing bushcraft, equestrian and engineering skills

Front cover: Captain Vyvyan Harmsworth, MC, Irish Guards near Ypres, Belgium, 1917.

Photograph: Benenden Parish Council Archives