



Benenden Magazine
July 2017



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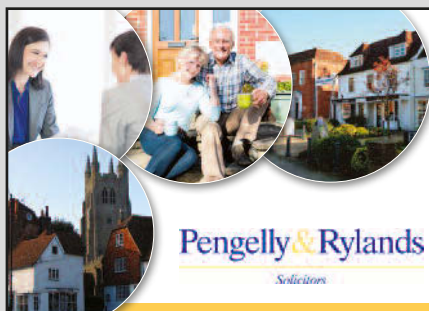
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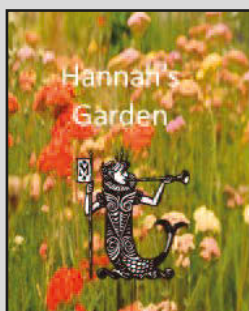


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Editorial



Uncertainty seems to be the name of the game at the moment. An unstable world, results that seemed a certainty unceremoniously turned on their heads - the referendum that didn't produce the expected decision, the election that failed to deliver a landslide. The recent terrorist attacks have brought a new worry to doing things that we took completely for granted: going to a concert, visiting London or having a drink in a popular venue. The tower block fire has made everyone question whether the mountain of 'Health & Safety' regulation is worth the flammable paper it's written on. No community is immune. Who'd have predicted we'd have such torrential rain and wind in June that the Woodcock would flood? It would be easy to feel depressed.

Changing times are also an opportunity to look at things anew and take stock, not to retreat into an isolated 'safe place'. There is a prayer which goes: 'God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference' which seems particularly apposite. What's the point of worrying about things we can't change? On the other hand let's get on with the things we can do! Maybe it's the small, local things that we can do something about which can give us the most security and pleasure: see more of family and friends, support the community, visit the surrounding countryside, go to our local pub or shop.

Thank goodness there are people out there who want to run the world - rather than me! - but I feel increasingly protective of what we have here in Benenden and I'd rather they didn't ride roughshod over our wishes. So my mid-year resolution is to make more fuss (be more French make, a real scene) and protest more loudly. Embrace your inner Swampy!

Minnie Garnier, 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

July

Saturday 1	Bingo with ploughman's, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Sunday 2	Richard O'Neill, Organ Recital, St George's Church, 6pm	p.17
Friday 7	Blanket Boot Fair, The Green, 3.30pm	p.23
Saturday 8	London 5's Darts Knockout with nibbles, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Thursday 13	Benenden Women's Club, Hannah's Garden, 7.30pm	p.27
Thursday 13	ABF Reception and Sounding Retreat Gurkha Band, Benenden School, 6.30pm	p.9
Friday 14	Woodland Wide Games, Iden Green Congregational Church, 7pm	
Friday 14	St Michael's Hospice, Fund Raiser Quiz, St George's Club, 7.30pm	p.13
Sunday 16	Messy Church, The Rectory garden, Benenden, 4-6pm	p.21
Monday 17	Parish Council Meeting, Memorial Hall, 7.30pm	
Tuesday 18	Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm	p.29
Tuesday 18	Iden Green and Benenden WI, Mrs Hulm: In Harmony, Memorial Hall, 2pm	p.27
Wed 19-Sun 23	Benenden Tennis Tournament, Benenden School	p.15
Saturday 22	Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge Fundraising Quiz, The Bull, 6.30pm	p.13
Saturday 22	Skittles, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Tuesday 25	Merry and Bright, Memorial Hall, 3pm	
Wed 26-Fri 28	Youth Drama Workshop, Benenden Village Hall	p.9
Saturday 29	Jazz and Blues at the Pavilion, Open Air in Iden Green, 6pm	p.11

August

Saturday 5	Pop Quiz, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Mon 14-Fri 18	Nifty Feet Dance Camp, Benenden Village Hall	p.15

Benenden Youth Club/Streetcruizer, age 11+

Tuesdays at Benenden Village Hall, 6.30-8.30pm

Coffee Shop

Wednesdays in the Memorial Hall, 10-12noon

Cakes & Chaos: Cafe and Toddler Group

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

Refuse Lorry Collections

Saturday 1 July and Saturday 29 July for Domestic Waste

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

Saturday 15 July for Garden/Compostable Waste

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

Parish Council



For me, the most dreaded word in the English language must be “consultation”. Your Parish Council is bombarded with requests to respond to consultation on everything from planning to trains, from the proposed new civic complex in Tunbridge Wells to speed signage and traffic regulation orders. Consultation is now big business. It generates vast amounts of work at all levels of government. But there are several problems with this. The questions asked are frequently complex and lengthy such as in the recent local plan consultation. The first of a series. The consultation document was 55 pages long and the associated questionnaire was 25 pages. The second problem with all this bureaucracy is that responses often seem to descend into a black hole. There is seldom evidence that our views have changed policy or decisions. Too often the consultation process acts as a tick box allowing a local authority to impose unpopular decisions saying “well we went out to consultation”.

The latest local plan consultation is on how to deliver the 13,000 additional homes that we are told are needed for the Borough. There is no box to tick to say that we don’t want an additional 13,000 homes or 40,000 people at all. This would represent a tremendous increase in the size of villages such as ours. The Parish Council priority must be the provision of homes for our local people and their children.

TWBC has also issued a consultation document on its five-year plan for the Borough. Unfortunately this focusses on the town of Tunbridge Wells with only a passing reference to Cranbrook while Benenden is not mentioned at all.

It is on the needs of Benenden that the Parish Council has to concentrate. We will be helped in this by our Neighbourhood Development Plan. However this has to be consistent with the new TWBC local Plan, still in its early days, and national planning policy. So we don’t have a free hand. The next stage in this is now taking place. Yes- you’ve got it - TWBC is now out for consultation as to whether we should have a NDP at all! This consultation runs from 26 June to 24 July, and hundreds of consultees have been identified. So why not join in and have your say also, see our website or contact me.

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

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

Parish Council Meeting
Monday 17 July 2017, Memorial Hall,
7.30pm

Planning Committee Meeting
No meeting in July



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Just a Thought



In Touch

The visitors arrived and the expectant hosts stood in the porch whilst the driver went round to open the door and help his wife out. That was new. The four greeted each other with welcoming smiles, heartfelt hugs, and a slight surprise that one of their friends was more bent and surely an inch or two shorter than was remembered. With measured step rather than the old confident strides the visitors came in to the house and were settled with appropriate refreshment as they all slipped into familiar comfort with each other. Over lunch the conversation flowed happily with a mixture of shared memories and the exchange of news, which included various medical references, but especially the doings of the numerous grandchildren they had between them.

As the visitors were finally waved off with promises not to leave it so long again the hosts comforted each other that, though time had wrought physical changes, their friends were still the people they knew and loved.

Grandparents stood expectantly in the Arrivals Hall of the airport casting processing glances across the streams of people pushing loaded trolleys through the swing doors. There they were at last, but the grandparents almost didn't recognise their grandson who was now as tall as his mother and somewhat more lean, and confidently pushing a trolley. He was followed by the youngest - no longer a babe-in-arms but a feisty, independent youngster determined not to hold hands and to push her own mini Peppa Pig hand luggage through the sea of legs. A rather tired but beaming daughter appeared next followed by son-in-law and a slightly lanky, purple haired teenager who wasn't sure how she wanted to greet the grandparents. These same grandparents were quick to absorb the obvious physical changes and before long were eager to discover, face to face, how the minds, thoughts, ambitions and outlook on life had changed in this next generation.

Shock, dismay and puzzlement were on display as the pensioner announced to friends at a village lunch party, that she intended to move up north to be nearer her children and their families. This was not because of any infirmity, though that might come, but so as to be on the spot as inevitable changes came about both in the family and in her.

'But you will be leaving friends and places that you have known for years and years,' the friends countered.

'I know and that will be hard,' came the reply.

'What about using Skype?' someone offered tentatively.

'Not enough! I want to be in touch with the changes for real.'

Everyone sat and digested this news and there was quiet round the table. Trying to lift the mood the pensioner said earnestly,

'But I shan't be abandoning you altogether. I will still come and visit you, after all you are my very good friends.'



Church Calendar

St George's Church

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

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

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

www.benendenchurch.org 850849 benendenchurch@gmail.com

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

Sunday 2 July	8am Communion	10am All-age Communion and Sunday School	5pm Choral Evensong 6pm Organ Recital
Sunday 9 July	8am 1662 Communion	10am Morning Worship	5pm Evening Prayer at Mission Church
Sunday 16 July	8am Communion	10am Sung Eucharist	4pm Messy Church in The Rectory garden
Sunday 23 July	8am Communion	10am Morning Worship	5pm Praise Service at Mission Church
Sunday 30 July	8am Benefice Communion at St Nicholas Church, Sandhurst	10am Benefice All-age Communion	

Mission Church, Sandhurst

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

Every Tuesday 10am Communion

Iden Green Congregational Church

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

Sunday Services 10am Morning Worship 5.30pm Evening Worship

The Roman Catholic Chapel

Fr Barry Grant 713364 www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org

Masses 9am Sundays 7.30pm Holy Days

From the Parish Registers

Baptism 18 June Violet Norris

Weddings 10 June Linda Shotter and Mark Goodchild
17 June Karen Ward and Thomas Snell

Funeral 29 June Peter Moore Thanksgiving Service

Rector's Letter



Life is to be lived

I do confess to feeling a little election fatigue of late! (Scottish Independence Referendum, September 2014; a general election in May 2015; Brexit in June 2016; another general election - with a surprising result! - in June 2017; and local elections in that period too.) You remember Brenda from Bristol: "You're joking - not another one! Honestly I can't stand this." Moreover, there is, of course, every prospect of another election in less than five years; people will start to moan about all this! However, just be grateful you live in a democracy and can enjoy having a choice.

In the same period, we have also had some surprising results in elections in other countries, one of which makes me concerned for the world's future and stability. We have also witnessed, on our televisions, huge numbers of refugees travelling across parts of Africa and the Middle East entering Europe and trying to cross the channel to the UK. We have witnessed atrocities of innocent people being killed by IS. In the last three months, we have seen three terrorist attacks taking place in our country: on Westminster Bridge and in the grounds of Parliament; at a concert enjoyed by many youngsters in Manchester; and on London Bridge and Borough Market. In these, so many innocent people have lost their lives and many others will have to deal with physical injuries and mental anguish and pain for probably the rest of their lives. In these attacks, we have witnessed the worst of human behaviour, but we have also witnessed humanity at its very best. We have seen a few individuals carrying out senseless, violent, brutal, murderous acts; but we have seen many, many more people showing love, compassion and care to complete strangers. And today, as I write this, we have seen again love and compassion in the community in West London as people have reacted to the devastating fire in a tower block. In all of these events, we have seen selfless acts by so many members of the emergency services and the public.

Humanity at its best is so beautiful; humanity at its worst can be utterly shocking. In one quote I have read today from London, a Paul Kipulu said, "There is nothing here but love; and I wanted to help." Oh that we could all take that attitude to living our lives, and it not take some tragedy to bring this out in us. All human life is valuable: whatever our culture, background, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, gender. I want to encourage you to live life; to enjoy life; to enjoy your family. None of us knows what is around the corner in our lives. So please, please - live in love. Life is too short, too fragile, too vulnerable, too precious to worry and argue about insignificant things. Life is to be lived and enjoyed - in harmony with everyone else.

Revd David Commander, Rector

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FREE 2-DAY DRAMA WORKSHOP



9-11 yr olds - Weds 26th & Thurs 27th July
12-14 yr olds - Thurs 27th & Fri 28th July

2-day drama master class
for youngsters in Benenden
and Iden Green in Benenden
Village Hall.

Each age group will spend
a day with Hannah Miles
Watson looking at different
styles of performance,
concentrating on Pantomime.
How to be big and bold but

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News and Events

Youth Drama Workshop

Group 1, Wednesday 26 and Thursday 27 July,
Benenden Village Hall;

Group 2, Thursday 27 and Friday 28 July,
Benenden Village Hall

Looking for something for your children to do in the summer holidays? For the first time, Benenden Players are holding a free 2-day Summer Drama Workshop in July for 9-14 year olds living in the Parish.

Age groups are split into two categories:

Group 1 for 9-11 year olds

Workshop Wednesday 26 and Thursday 27 July

Group 2 for 12-14 year olds

Workshop Thursday 27 and Friday 28 July

Each group will spend a day with Hannah Miles Watson looking at different styles of performance, concentrating on pantomime. The children will learn how to be big and bold but stay believable.

Then both age groups will all come together on one day to experience a unique 'Play in a Day' with the world-famous Strangeface Mask Company.

If you have seen a Strangeface performance you will know how hilarious, weird and wonderful the masked characters are. The masks are spellbinding, often grotesque and always extraordinary in the way they can leave characters permanently agape, watchful or wary.

During the day, the youngsters will learn what makes a good mask, before making their own and exploring the masks using exercises, improvisation and finally a mini play.

We are very pleased that funding provided by the Benenden Bonfire Society has made this possible.

Spaces are limited to 15 in each group. To book your free place please sign up at Benenden's Community Shop as soon as possible. For more information please call: Ruth Clark 07767 261883



Viscount De L'Isle MBE
President ABF The Soldiers' Charity in Kent
invites you to a Reception and Sounding Retreat
by The Band of The Royal Gurkha Rifles
at Benenden School
By kind permission of the Headmistress
on Thursday 13 July 2017
at 6.30pm

If you would like to attend please email
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Tickets £32

Benenden Players News

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

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

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

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

DICK TURPIN: A DOUBLE AWARD WINNER
NODA (National Operatic and Dramatic Association) have given our January 2016 panto a Regional Accolade of Excellence, and it was Runner-Up in the Regional NODO Councillor's Award for Pantomime.

Huge thanks to the cast, production team and crew, our supportive families and friends, and of course our lovely audiences. We'll be at a fabulous Awards Ceremony at the AGM in July.

Nancy Tolhurst 07711 139218
nancy.tolhurst@btinternet.com



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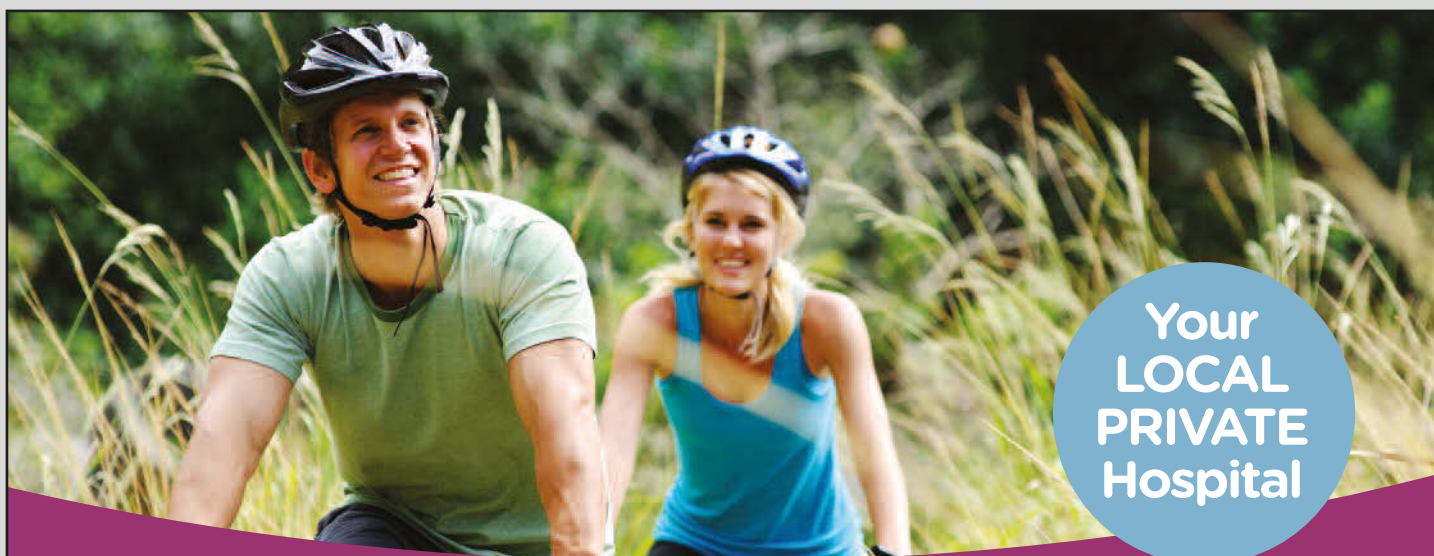
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Summer Jazz and Blues

Saturday 29 July, Iden Green Pavilion, 6pm

If you have never experienced the Summer Jazz and Blues on the Green, come along and have a real treat on 29 July! The music provided by Benenden Jazz is easy listening, being taken from a variety of popular standards such as The Girl from Ipanema, It Had to be You, Take Five, Black Coffee and many more. The Band comprises Debbie Katis (vocals), Barry Bassett (tenor and alto sax), Lyn Grimsey (alto sax and clarinet), Robin Vesma (electric double bass and bass guitar), Simon Pain (drums), Graham Beveridge on keyboard and featuring Peter Hadaway on Vibes.

By way of contrast, this year's blues band, Summertime Blues will be providing a mixture of electric and acoustic blues, with Peter Angell (bass), Rob Studholme (lead guitar) and Bill Lewis (guitar and vocals)

This is the sixth year in succession that the Pavilion Trustees have run this event in partnership with the jazz and blues musicians and it grows year-on-year in popularity. All proceeds go to charity including Alzheimer's Society, Macmillans, Victims of Landmines and the Iden Green Pavilion.

The gates open at 6pm on the Green outside the Pavilion and you are invited to bring a picnic and your own chairs or groundsheet. There will also be a barbecue serving beef burgers and sausages all evening and a beer tent serving real ale, Pimm's, wines and soft drinks. Families are welcome. The evening will finish at about 9.30pm.

If you like listening to tuneful music in a relaxed atmosphere whilst enjoying the company of friends, this evening is a must, so don't miss it!

Tickets: £6 in Benenden's Community Shop or £7 on the gate. Children under 12 go free.
The Jazz and Blues Team

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St Michael's Hospice Fund Raiser Quiz

Friday 14 July, St George's Club, Benenden,
7.30pm

For St Michael's Hospice in St Leonards, Peter Ellis and Andy Irving are once again donning their lycra, hopping on their bicycles and aiming to complete an Olympic 100 miles in one day as part of the RideLondon festival on 30 July. You can help their fund raising by taking part in the Fun and Fabulous Fund Raiser Quiz. Details are above. To book please call:

Ruth Clark 07767 261883

Talisker Whisky Atlantic Row Challenge Fundraising Quiz

Saturday 22 July, The Bull, 6.30pm for
7pm start

Tickets are £15pp to include lasagne and ice cream supper. Bookings please call 240054 or email enquiries@thebullatbenenden.co.uk

In December I will be part of a crew of four undertaking to row across Atlantic. I am trying to raise funds for the challenge. For more information please see

www.headstogetherandrow.org.uk

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Benenden Tennis Tournament 2017

Wednesday 19-Sunday 23 July, Benenden
School

Come and play at this year's Benenden Tennis
Tournament!

What began as an annual tennis gathering to bring players together to enjoy a friendly competition has grown into a fundraising event. Five full days of tennis: three with about 100 children on each of the junior days on 11 courts, the weekend with Men's, Ladies' and Mixed players. All levels and ages are welcome to participate and many come to catch-up with old friends.

Over the years we have some fantastic sponsors; and local businesses and individuals continue their generous support for which we are very grateful. Therefore all monies raised can be then given to local charities.

During the tournament we have a refreshment tent serving tea, coffee and lots of mouth-watering home-made cakes, plus a very busy sweet stall which the younger competitors enjoy. We also hold raffles on most days with lots of fantastic prizes, again all very kindly donated.

Last year we raised £9,850 which was distributed amongst 17 charities, mainly children's charities, and all are based locally and can be seen on our web-site:
www.benendentennistournament.com

We would be very grateful for any offers of raffle prizes - contact Anna on annamcdl@gmail.com - and from 19 July gifts of cakes are very much appreciated.

We would also like to invite people living nearby to join us, watch a bit of tennis over a cup of tea and soak up the tremendous atmosphere.

Entries to this year's tournament can be made online, with email and phone numbers also available on:
www.benendentennistournament.com



Juniors 19, 20 and 21 July 2017

Adults 22 and 23 July 2017

at Benenden School

Come and play at this year's
Benenden Tennis Tournament
All levels welcome

Homemade teas ~ Raffle ~ Bring a picnic lunch
100% of our proceeds go to charity

Contact us via our website
www.benendentennistournament.com



Nifty Feet Dance Camp

Monday 14-Friday 18 August, Benenden
Village Hall

Nifty Feet is the pop-up dance school of Lynne Page, leading global dance choreographer who works in theatre, film, opera and the music industry.

Lynne recently moved to Bodiam and is passionate about bringing cool, fun and funky dance to children and teenagers in Kent and East Sussex.

A specialist in youth dance, Lynne trained Jamie Bell for the smash hit 'Billy Elliot' film, and she set up the Billy Elliot training schools across the UK.

Lynne runs her pop-up dance camps at Benenden Village Hall, inviting her busy dancers from her commercial shows to come and deliver masterclasses in hip hop, street and contemporary dance. Details opposite.

It is not just the exceptional quality of teaching that puts Nifty Feet ahead of any other dance school. Lynne's students learn so much more than dance technique. Her philosophy is to build self-esteem and confidence beyond dance, by freeing up the mind and body through creative thought and movement.

For more information and booking, see the website www.niftyfeet.co.uk

Joanna Hancock

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Benenden Pre-School News

A Teddy Bear's picnic in the Glebe, a visit from esteemed Primary School representatives, Mrs Knox and Mrs Toynbee, and the loving creation of Father's Day cards and presents - it's been a typically busy June for Pre-School.

July brings our Open Day, where we invite prospective parents and children to come and see our premises, meet the staff and see what we get up to on a daily basis. There will be cakes, a raffle and games - and the unveiling of the 'Dad's Challenge' (cue variations of a 'Mini Beast Hotel'). July also marks the end of the school year, when we say goodbye to our little (or, perhaps now, not-so-little) leavers, ready to move on to their next big adventure. Best of luck to them, and a huge thank you to the wonderful staff for having looked after them for the past few years. Happy holidays, everyone.

www.benendenpreschool.co.uk

9th annual Richard Beattie Davis musical events

Saturday 29 July, Sandhurst, 3pm

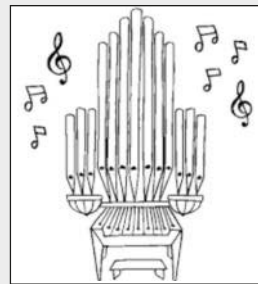
Daniel Grimwood will be performing at this year's garden party event. The interesting programme will consist of Ravel, Myaskovsky, Henselt, Blumenfeld and other rarities. Daniel has recently appeared in a re-run of the series 'Revolution and Romance' with Suzy Klein on BBC4. You can still catch it on iPlayer.

Tuesday 12 September, Sandhurst, 3pm

Malcolm Binns, piano recital, works by Chopin, Bach/Busoni, Schumann and Mendelssohn.

Both events are in aid of Hospice in the Weald. Tickets by donation (minimum £16), in advance:

Gillian Davis 850384



Richard O'Neill

ORGAN RECITAL

Sunday 2 July 2017

St George's Church, Benenden

6pm

following Choral Evensong at 5pm

St George's Church new Director of Music

We are delighted to be welcoming Charlotte O'Neill as our Director of Music from the end of June. Charlotte lives with her husband Richard and their family near Hawkhurst. A Durham University graduate she has led choirs there and at churches in Houston Texas, Frittenden and Maidstone. The first service at which Charlotte will be directing the choir will be Choral Evensong on 2 July; Richard will be playing the organ and giving a recital afterwards.

Richard began his musical studies as a chorister at Westminster Abbey under Simon Preston and Martin Neary. This was followed by music scholarships at Rugby School and Durham University. Since then his musical activities have included performances in the UK, the US, Italy and the Netherlands; he currently plays at All Saints, Maidstone, and St Mary's, Frittenden.

His programme for 2 July:

Bach - Piece d'Orgue

Langlais - Suite Medievale

Vierne - Carillon de Westminster

Andriessen - Finale from Sonata da Chiesa

Revd David Commander, Rector



The pews are Victorian
as is the altar and the
Chapel seats 100 people

The Roman Catholic Chapel

The white weather-boarded Roman Catholic Chapel in New Pond Road was built in 1931 by Mrs Ella Scrymsour-Nichol. It is a Colt building, designed by Messers Colt of Bethersden and is in the early English style, examples of which can also be seen in Gloustershire. The cost was approximately £450 and local labour was employed for its construction.

Before 1926 the nearest Catholic Mass centre to Benenden was Goudhurst and Mrs Scrymsour-Nichol was told that moving to Benenden would 'cut her off from the Church'. She took the risk and moved into the house then known as Our Lady's Dowry, now The Holt.

For the next few years she arranged with Father Mendham of Goudhurst to come over and say the occasional Mass in her garage. In 1931 with help from friends Mrs Scrymsour-Nichol purchased the land from the neighbouring farmers, the Henley's, and built the main body of the white weather-boarded building you see today. The Sacristy, at the far end, was added at a later stage. It was built 'for the Catholics of Benenden' and was dedicated to the memory of her husband. The Chapel stands in an acre of ground, which at the time she intended should include a school and a priest's house but these never materialised. The Chapel remained in the Parish of Goudhurst until 1963 when St Theodore's Catholic Church was built in Cranbrook and it became, and still is, part of St Theodore's Parish.

During the war Mr Blakemore, who was born in the house next door to the Chapel and still lives there, remembers British troops using the field for manoeuvres and in the 1970s his daughter remembers sitting on their garage roof to watch the filming of Anne of Green Gables. The Chapel was used twice for filming in the 1970s.

There have been five weddings in the Chapel. The first, in 1950, was that of Joanne Scrymsour-Nichol, Ella's daughter. Our daughter Charlotte was also married there in 2013 and our three children and their children have all been baptised in the Chapel, along with many others since 1931.

Mass is said at The Chapel every Sunday at 9am and every Holy Day at 7pm. Today the congregation is on average 20 to 25, with

Catholics not only from Benenden but many surrounding villages. There is coffee after Mass, at approximately 9.45am, on the first Sunday of every month, held outside in the summer months and around the pews in the winter to which everyone is most welcome to come and join us.

Genevieve Greenwood

*To the memory of
Mrs Scrymsour-Nichol
who using her own resources
and devoting
much energy to the
erection of this church in 1931
greatly benefited
generations of the
local Catholic community.*



above: Showing original stepped Dutch gable end which was removed as it was causing damp

middle and below: The newly built chapel from the next-door garden

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Letter to the Editor

Please email the Editor,
benendenparishmagazine@gmail.com

WALKHURST ROAD DECISION

The disappointing decision to allow a speculative developer to build 12 houses in Walkhurst Road, on a greenfield site; in the supposedly protected Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; outside the limits to built development, is a worrying sign of the way things are going. Even more irksome was that this was not granted by a planning inspector on appeal but was passed by Tunbridge Wells Council's own Planning Committee. For technical reasons the usual protection for rural planning applications is being routinely overturned. The borough does not have enough land identified in its plan to build the houses the government says it needs over five years. The local plan 2006-2026 anticipated building 6,000 houses - 300 a year. In 2015 a new government survey suddenly found the borough needed 13,000 houses. In the past a developer could be deterred from trying it on in sites like Walkhurst Road because it was not an officially identified site in the local plan and had all the protections. Now developers can override all these things because the Council does not have a five-year housing land supply. Thus appeals in Hawkhurst and Sissinghurst on similar sites have been decided in favour of the developer because housing provision overrides everything. It may be inevitable that planning inspectors grant these appeals but I strongly feel our own planning committee should not be colluding in the increasingly rapid potential ruination of rural areas. Applications like this which are against our policies should be turned down by our planners as a matter of principle. I fear that town-centred Tunbridge Wells Council is less attentive to the concerns of rural areas. We are presently debating where we will put 13,000 houses and I and most of the rural councillors will be arguing against scattering them among villages like Benenden.

Seán Holden, Borough and County Councillor
for Benenden



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**Sunday
23 July**

**Sandhurst
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at 5pm**



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The first hour is the craft stuff.
Then we have a short time of informal worship.
Finally we'll sit down and eat a meal together.

Please come and join us. You do not have to get messy,
just have fun!

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

Vona Reynolds - Art teacher at Angley School

A small exhibition of Modernist 20th-century pictures, given by Vona Reynolds to Angley School, is at Cranbrook Library from 4-27 July.

Vona was the much-loved and inspirational art teacher at Mary Sheafe and at Angley School from 1968-92. She died in November 2016. This exhibition is in memory of her.

Pictures courtesy of High Weald Academy.
Weekdays 9-6pm, Saturdays 9.30-4pm.
Sundays and Mondays closed. Entry free.

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Richard Brunt on:

07834 572838 or email bruntrichard@btinternet.com



Benenden CE Primary School

The Tenterden Lion's Choir Competition is an annual competition for local schools, this year held in St Mildred's, Tenterden. Two of our pupils, Megan and Daisy, reported back from our school's day there:

There were four judges. In the first song Everything Has Changed, two of the judges were really enjoying it. After that we all felt relieved but nervous in case our next song went wrong. Our other song Strange Kind of Friend was introduced by our rain sounds which we make in assembly.

There was a tense moment when the places were announced. In third place was Tenterden Junior School, in second place Rolvenden and after what felt like an age, in first place came BENENDEN!

A huge thank you to Mrs Brook for organising it all and congratulations to all the children who competed.

And finally ...

A great time was enjoyed at our Queen's Sapphire tea on the Green, where 150 people joined together to celebrate Her Majesty's 65-year reign. It was a beautiful afternoon enhanced by the lovely picnic boxes, cream teas and Pimm's. Thank you to the PTFA, led by Carianne Smith-Hamilton, for organising this.
Gill Knox, Headteacher

Benenden Cricket Club

Our home matches in July are:

Saturday 1 July v Teston 2pm

Sunday 2 July v Newenden 2pm

Sunday 9 July v Edwardstone 2pm

Saturday 15 July v Smallhythe 2pm

Sunday 16 July v Bodiam 2pm

Saturday 22 July v Bilsington 2pm

Sunday 23 July v Linton Park 2pm

Saturday 29 July v Castle Hill 2pm

Sunday 30 v July Bearsted 2pm

Richard Brunt, Club Captain

Cranbrook 5k and 10k run

Sunday 16 July, High Weald Academy,
Cranbrook, 10.30am

Benenden Primary School PTFA have been invited to take part in the Cranbrook 5k and 10k run there is also a Children's 1k run, that you register for on the day. Use the promotion code BEN_PTA_17 to get £2 off your entry when booking via Benenden Primary School at www.sportingeventsuk.com

We will also host numerous stalls on the day to entertain and provide some refreshments. Come along and join parents and children taking part, our school is a healthy school; we strive to show all ages we can be healthy together.

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News from Benenden School

At the time of writing, we have only five weeks of the term remaining, so we are very much at the 'business end' of the year. As you would expect at this time of the year, the focus is on exams and girls in all year groups have been sitting exams - internal ones if they are not faced with GCSE, AS or A Levels.

Nevertheless, there is still plenty of learning and excitement to come. For example, girls in the lower years will be enjoying Enquiry Weeks, when usual lessons are set aside to allow them to concentrate on a particular themed project for an entire week, and there are an abundance of trips in the final few weeks of term, with visits including those to Austria and to the Battlefields.

We are preparing to say a fond farewell to the Sixth Formers who will be leaving us next month, and we are planning our usual celebratory Speech Day, this year being held on Saturday 8 July. We are aware that there were some concerns from local residents about some of the parking by guests at our Confirmation service recently, and I would like to take this opportunity to assure villagers that we are putting measures in place to try to alleviate such issues in future. For Speech Day itself, we will have parking marshals on hand as usual to coordinate parking arrangements.

The week before Speech Day, we invite grandparents to the School to experience life at Benenden. They will enjoy a performance of *The Tempest* before Sports Day in the afternoon - I would say we are keeping our fingers crossed for fine weather but frankly any weather would be better than last year, when we had to abandon the event because of thunderstorms and hail!

Before we know it, the summer holidays will be upon us and we are looking forward to a variety of events and activities here at School during July and August, including the much-anticipated Benenden Tennis Tournament, which we are delighted to be hosting once again.

Samantha Price, Headmistress



Village Activity and Fun Day

Saturday 2 September, The Green, 3-6pm

As the summer drew to a close last year, the inaugural community fun day took place in Benenden. Set on the village green against a backdrop of live music, food, drink, and vintage vehicles, residents of all ages enjoyed themselves, throwing wellies, catching cricket balls, attempting to cycle a reversible bike, and testing their strength on the bungee elastic.

This year's Village Activity and Fun Day will take place on the afternoon of Saturday 2 September, 3-6pm. Based again on The Green, the event promises to be even better this year, with an even wider range of activities for an even wider range of ages. And, as ever, all the activities are FREE! Grab a friend, bring the family, and come along.

A big thank you to all our contributors who give of their time freely. If you have an activity you think would be a fitting addition to the day, then please get in touch with:

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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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Benenden Women's Club

The Women's Club did not meet in June because the Pavilion was being used as a polling station. Our next meeting will be on Thursday 13 July when we shall be visiting Hannah's Garden, Apple Pie Farm, Benenden and all those requiring lifts should contact Judy on 240884 or Ruth on 242852.

Our 10 August meeting will be a visit to Sedlescombe vineyard which includes a tour and wine tasting, and likewise all requiring lifts should contact Judy or Ruth. We shall meet at the vineyard at 2pm.

Ruth Barwick

Iden Green and Benenden WI

The month of May always sees our Annual General meeting, which is a time for re-electing Committee Members and adding two new Committee members, Barbara Denyer and Mary Golding. During the meeting the finances were reported to members and then sent to be audited.

May also saw some of our members go to a lunch at the Walled Garden in Hawkhurst. To welcome in the beginning of June one of our members held a coffee morning with a raffle and plant sale on their farm. £130 of funds was raised through the generosity of our members.

Dates to remember:

Tuesday 18 July, 'In Harmony' presented by Mrs Hulm, Memorial Hall, 2-4pm.

Let us hope that warm weather continues over the summer for us to enjoy holidays at home or abroad.

Elisabeth Spicer 07572 914460

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Talking Shop

ANYONE FOR STRAWBERRIES?

If the answer to that question is a resounding 'YES', then look no further than Benenden's Village Shop. The scrumptious strawberries sold at the shop are sourced by our local supplier PK Produce, from Hugh Lowe Farm in Maidstone. Hugh Lowe has supplied all the strawberries for Wimbledon, via their catering company, for over 20 years. At the farm the plants are protected by tunnels which also promote a favourable microclimate to prevent disease and encourage beneficial insects to control pests.

Strawberries are an excellent source of vitamins C and K as well as providing fibre, folic acid, manganese and potassium. They have long been used medicinally to help with digestive ailments, teeth whitening and skin irritations. They contain powerful antioxidants and are thought to protect against inflammation, cancer and heart disease.

Strawberries are not actually berries as their apparent 'seeds' are on the outside, reproducing instead by putting out runners. First cultivated in France, large strawberries were traditionally classed as a luxury item to be enjoyed only by the rich. However, because of its many seeds it was believed to be an aphrodisiac so a strawberry and sour cream, borage and sugar soup was given to French newly-weds. Be that as it may, there are few simple pleasures as agreeable as a dish of strawberries with cream (Cardinal Wolsey's idea) on a fine summer's day and both high quality products will be available in Benenden's.

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

We would like to extend our very grateful thanks to the volunteers who so staunchly and cheerfully worked extra hours in the café recently when regular staff were unable to be there. Your hard work and commitment are very much appreciated.

Bev Beveridge

Jane's Kitchen

Excellent hot starter or cold with BBQ and hot crusty bread; can be prepared day ahead.

PIEDMONT PEPPERS

Serves 4

Preparation 10min, cooking time 40min

2 large red peppers, cut in half lengthways, seeds removed
2 garlic cloves
4 cherry tomatoes, cut in half
8 basil leaves
2 anchovy fillets
25g butter
40ml olive oil
125g mozzarella cheese

METHOD

- Pre-heat oven to 180C/160Fan/Gas mark 4.
- Place the pepper halves onto a baking sheet.
- Place the following into each pepper half in this order: 2-3 slices of garlic, 1 cherry tomato cut in half, 1 basil leaf, ½ an anchovy fillet, small nut of butter, another basil leaf and finish with 1 dsp of olive oil.
- Place in oven for 30min.
- Remove peppers from oven, put a large slice of mozzarella cheese on top of each, put back in the oven until melted and peppers are soft.

Jane Drysdale 291027

drysdale@bishopsdaleoast.co.uk

Village Lunch

Tuesday 18 July, Benenden Village Hall,
12.30pm

All welcome - £4 a head. If you need a lift please let us know and we can arrange it. Please contact Sheila on 01580 240838 if you haven't already put your name down but would like to come. We look forward to seeing you.

There will be no Village Lunch in August.



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 NEW FOUNDATION BURSARY SCHEME FOR YEAR 3 ENTRY

Pork, storks and corks

Alsace is not a fashionable place. If it

were an item of clothing, it would be a pair of lederhosen worn by a morbidly obese man on a bicycle ride. It attracts curiosity and amusement far more than it invites admiration.

Wine from Alsace has never had the same foothold in the British market enjoyed by its German equivalent, yet its slender Germanic bottles have seen it afflicted by the prejudice engendered by the Blue Nun and Black Tower invasion of the 1970s and 80s. Mention Alsatian wine to a standard drinker and you'll be greeted by the rhetorical question: "Isn't it all really sweet?" In a bad way.

Some of the best wines from the region are really sweet, in a good way. A decent late-harvest Gewurztraminer will deliver as much residual sugar as an explosion at Tate & Lyle headquarters, and the sweetness spills over into many producers' versions of Alsace's other grapes as well, the Pinot Gris and the Pinot Blanc in particular, while even the Rieslings can veer from honey to petrol via uncompromising acidity: so you have to try before you buy.

This was my third trip to the area, and if you have a picture postcard view of Alsace consisting of medieval towns full of quaint half-timbered houses on mazy cobbled streets, perched among vertiginous vineyards in the foothills of picturesque mountains, Ribeauville in a nutshell.

Climb 500 metres above the commune and you'll find the obligatory castles - three of them no less; down the slopes, there's the right geology, from granite and schist, to marl, sandstone and limestone, to support all manner of worthy grapes. It boasts producers of the standing of Trimbach, whose £170 a bottle Clos Sainte Hune induces flutters in the hearts of



Riesling devotees worldwide, but its streets hold a breadth and depth of vinous pleasure.

As chance would have it, I was able to walk out of my front door on Rue de la Fraternite, turn left past the immovable toothless crone on the wooden chair - presumably placed there by Gallic Central Casting to stare distrustfully at tourists - and walk straight into the tasting room at Domaine Jean Sipp.

I went through the carte on three successive nights and narrowed it down to an excellent Muscat Reserve at 8.60 euros - lovely unsung aperitif, flowery and grapey and just a smidge off dry - a very passable cremant rose that delivers beyond the dreams of most supermarket champagnes for a mere 11.30 euros, and the splendid Grand Cru Kirchberg de Ribeauville 2013, which may set you back 23 euros but has everything an Alsace riesling should have, in terms of the precarious balance of ripe, peachy fruit, full body and steely finish.

Emboldened, I headed down the Grand Rue, past more producers than you could shake a cured pork saucisson at, past the town hall with the symbolic black, white and red storks nesting rather messily on its roof, into the Cave de Ribeauville.

This is the local co-op - which will appeal to the army of socialist wine drinkers in Benenden - but it's not just any old co-op. It's the oldest co-op in France, established in 1885, and in 2015 it was named best co-op in the country by the Revue du Vin de France.

It's no spartan shed of the republic, either, offering stylish relief from the 35-degree heat, along with wine from eight Grands Crus vineyards, and encouraging the purchase of fine lieu-dit Haguenu Riesling at a criminally cheap 8.80 euros and lieu-dit Pinot Gris Silberberg at 9.10, along with more Muscat (vieilles vignes this time at 6.90, and even better), which may not see out the asparagus season.

All this plus mountain food to sustain the hungry hiker, surprisingly appetising Germanic cabbage, forthright Munster cheese, no lederhosen in sight and barely an annoying Brit to spoil the view.

Peter Thomas

Local Enterprise ... Enterprising Locals

NIGEL 'POODLE' ROBERTS

It wasn't a good night for Nigel Roberts. Just when he thought life couldn't get any more depressing than watching a farcical general election unfold in the early hours, he went to lock up at the Woodcock and found that torrential rain outside had barged its way in and was making unwelcome progress through the building.

The pub has undoubtedly survived far worse than this flash flooding since it opened its doors in 17th-century Iden Green, but the timing would have been bad enough even without the political kerfuffle that was putting the tin hat on a turbulent year.

The space does not exist to do justice to his forthright opinions, but suffice it to say that Nigel is bothered by Brexit, mistrustful of Mrs May and downright traumatised by Corbyn, not least because of the damage the three are in the process of wreaking on the High Weald pub trade.

"I've learned never to discuss politics in a pub," he warns himself, before continuing, "but ... Brexit has affected us, no doubt. I've got a lot of European friends, German and Dutch, and the feeling in Europe is that they don't want to come over and support a country that has left the EU.

"You only have to look on the roads and see the lack of European plates to see how badly it has impacted on businesses in the tourist industry in Kent and Sussex. We usually do 12 tables a week of European customers at this time of year and we're down to one, which hurts, and the election will only make it worse. It sends a message to Europe that this country is a bloody mess, which it is."

Just in case you don't recognise Nigel from the above, you may know him better as 'Poodle', as do the Woodcock regulars who welcomed him into

their spiritual home when he became landlord in 2015.

"It was what I was called when I was eight, when I had curly hair, and a lot more of it than I have now," explains the 57-year-old, "and it stuck all through education and through 27 years in the City."



Poodle hailed originally from Lancashire but his parents came to north Kent when he was a mere pup in 1968. He worked as a derivatives broker for ICAP, moved to Iden Green with his first wife and two young children in 1991, and soon became aware that this was where his future lay.

“I used to meet a friend at the Three Chimneys in Biddenden but he brought me here one day and the moment I walked through the door I loved the place,” he explains. “Owning the Woodcock was a long-held dream but when the old landlady was getting out of the business and offered it to me, I was too busy with my family, so I had to turn it down, but I stuck a penny in the beam above the till, which is still there, and said to myself ‘one day I’ll have that pub’.”

Divorced in 2003, Poodle left the City in 2009 to look after his sick parents, but finally the pub dream came to fruition and after 26 years in the village, he has lost none of his enthusiasm for the area or the establishment.

“I love it,” he says. “It’s hard graft and long hours but no different to the City and I think it’s very important to have a pub like this. We used to have the Royal Oak in Iden Green and the King William in Benenden, and they’ve both gone. There were nine pubs in Cranbrook and only two left, and it’s important for any community to have a watering hole, a place where nothing matters.

“I started going to the pub with my father on a Sunday before lunch, and this is that kind of place, a traditional inn that serves good food but hasn’t gone down the gastropub route and ended up like a soulless restaurant with a bar.

“I like it because it’s a community pub with regular clientele but also a lot of European trade because it’s only a short hop from the Continent. You don’t get places like this in Europe and people love it, in the winter with all the gundogs in here, everybody in their tweeds and the fire going, in the summer when the garden is a suntrap, as long as the sun is shining!”

A City trader with a sense of social responsibility may be a rare breed but Poodle is committed to the village cause and still working on his dream of buying the freehold of the Woodcock so he can turn it into his dream pub. When he’s not shooting, skiing or sweeping floodwater out of the loos, he can be found in the bar with his core of regular customers, definitely not discussing politics but probably thanking their lucky stars they live in Iden Green.

“The village has changed but I still love living round here,” he says. “I go shooting to Devon for three days every year and it’s beautiful but when I come back I realise it’s just as beautiful here. I never tire of it, especially all the time we have places like this.

“People still like pubs. The local farmers and the trades boys need somewhere to go for a quick pint after work and the great thing about it is that you can always find a good painter and decorator, a good plumber, electrician or builder by word of mouth.

“People come here to talk and that’s what being a community pub is all about.”

Peter Thomas



Bird Notes

In the middle of May I spent a week in the New Forest, an area with which I am unfamiliar. I look forward to visiting new places and seeing what bird species are there. The forest is one of the largest wild areas in Southern England with many different habitats. It is well known for its Dartford Warbler, Woodlarks and breeding Goshawks so my expectations were, as always, on the optimistic side. My first walk was amongst the many areas of gorse bushes, which is where the Dartford Warbler likes to breed. The first species to reveal itself was a Stonechat, easily recognised by its clicking call, not unlike two stones being knocked together. This was a lovely male with black head, white collar and orange breast. This species would be one I would see frequently every day. The next species was a handsome male Greenfinch, its green back and yellow primaries standing



out well in the sun. It was on top of a holly tree singing its unmusical wheezy song. I was to see a pleasing number of Greenfinches over the week, particularly but not exclusively, in the holly trees. This species has a worrying decline due to the avian trichomoniasis disease, so it was good to see a healthy population here. The next species to catch my attention was a flying Cuckoo that was calling on the wing. It conveniently perched on a nearby tree and I enjoyed good views of its streaky breast and dropped wing profile. Cuckoos were plentiful and I would have liked to have known what species they parasitized in the forest. In

these wild areas the Meadow Pipit tends to be a preferred species but the numbers of Meadow Pipit were pretty low. It seems to be a good year for Cuckoos and I have heard it most days in Iden Green and elsewhere locally. The walk now entered a wooded enclosure with a good diversity of trees hosting singing Willow Warblers, Blackcaps and Garden Warblers. In the coniferous parts Siskin were much in evidence with their easily recognisable whistle calls. This breeding season I have also seen and heard Siskin in both Hemsted and Bedgebury Forests. Most Siskins migrate to the northern forests in the U.K. and are only occasional breeders in the South but the New Forest is one of the exceptions where they breed regularly. On the edge of the wood there were a few loan trees and I heard the delightful song of the Tree Pipit. This was a species I was hoping to hear and see but I only had one other record during my stay. This is a species that disappeared from Hemsted Forest a few years back despite no obvious reason as the habitat still seems suitable and relatively unchanged. Unlike its cousin, the Meadow Pipit, the Tree Pipit is a summer visitor and may be its wintering areas are responsible for the decline.

My next visit was to Acres Down on the East side of the forest, known as a good place to see birds of prey, I was hoping to catch a glimpse of Goshawk or Honey-buzzard which breed in the forest. The Down is one of the high points in the forest giving very good views over a large area. There were plenty of Common Buzzards to scrutinise but I could not turn any of them into the target species although a lovely Hobby (small falcon) flew by to make up for my disappointment.

Further along the ridge there were plenty of gorse bushes with some silver birch amongst them. A bird with a cocked tail like a large Wren caught my eye and there on the tree was a Dartford Warbler. It gave only brief views before it dived back into the gorse. I was able to get some more brief views. The bird I saw was a male with grey head and a red/orange orbital eye ring. The dark red- wine coloured breast could also be seen, a magical handsome bird. This is typical bird watching where you search for one rare species in particular and end up seeing another completely different rare one!



The New Forest is also famous for its broad-leaf woodland and we visited one large such area west of Fritham. It was a brilliant sunny day and the new leaves on the oak trees shone with gorgeous new fresh green colour. Blackcaps were in full song and high up in the canopy I could hear a different song, I had a good idea what it was but as it was one that I have only occasionally heard before I wanted to make certain. I tracked around quite a large area and my neck was aching before the bird suddenly descended to a lower level and there before me was a brilliant male Redstart. Its grey back and black face and chin with a white forehead and rusty red breast and tail make it a very colourful bird. However in the dapple shade and forest floor it was quite difficult to pick out. Having connected the song with the bird I heard quite a few more before the day finished.

I have to say that the week was a bit of a disappointment, not so much that I did not see some of the rare birds but the lack of the more common species such as Skylark and Woodlark. I had

only two Tree Pipits and one Yellowhammer. I was surprised at the high level of grazing by both cattle and ponies; there was hardly a blade of grass to be seen and one could always see lots of animals. I gather that there is an EU subsidy for every head of cattle grazed on common land with no control on numbers and the habitat is suffering greatly and must account for the low numbers of the above mentioned species.

Charles Trollope 240821 cetetal@btinternet.com

Opposite: Stonechat, *Saxicola torquata*;

Above: Dartford Warbler, *Sylvia undata*;

Below: Redstart, *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Illustrations: Stephen Message www.message-wildlife-art.co.uk





The Village Gnome

PONDLIFE

It was over the Sunday roast that Father made his fateful announcement. It's true it didn't seem particularly fateful at the time - it just seemed a bit daft. I mean, why would anyone want to turn a perfectly nice sheep meadow into a large ornamental pond? And, above all, where would the water come from to fill it?

A few weeks later a letter arrived. The council was rebuilding the adjacent bridge and needed a sliver of our land. Following negotiations only slightly less protracted than those to build, say, a new school, father gave away the land in exchange for a pipe under the road. This to bring water from the old millpond into what he now insisted on referring to as his 'lake'.

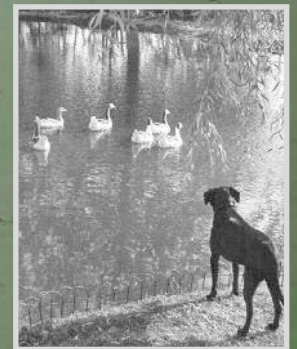
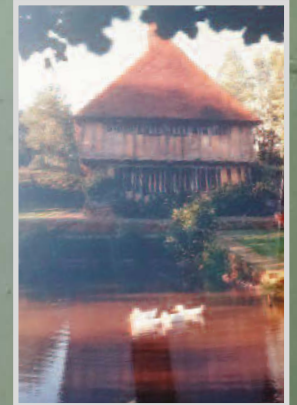
So the digger moved in and within hours, the ancient wildflower meadow was reduced to something resembling a Paul Nash landscape. Father, undaunted, held a small champagne ceremony as he removed the bung from the pipe and a trickle of water flowed forth. This marked the beginning of our problems. The four inch pipe constantly blocked with river-borne detritus. When sufficient water did enter and fill the pond, the bank between it and the river sprang leaks necessitating a concrete retaining wall. Ornamental waterfowl purchased for exorbitant sums flew off or just waddled down to the river and swam away. Glutinous mud on the bottom dissuaded even the hardiest bather and, while passing trout gave the pond a wide berth, black eels congregated joyfully.

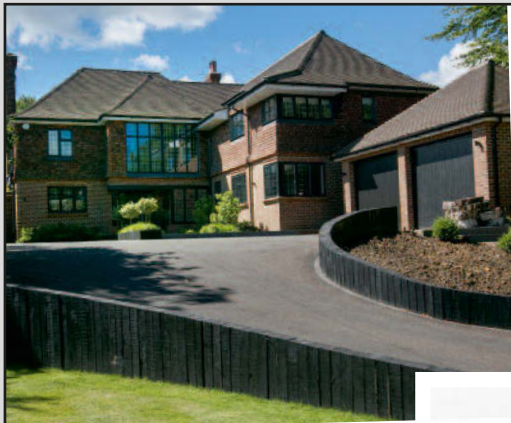
There is, in the family album, a photograph of ducks swimming serenely in water so clear it reflects the house like a mirror. But shrubs and trees colonised the water's edge, pond-weed flourished and the dreaded green algae began its inexorable mission to blanket the surface. It got so bad that an elderly short-sighted dog mistook the surface for an extension of the lawn. After he'd scrambled back up the bank, his black fur turned completely green, he smelled as rank as the hound of Hades.

Father tried everything. Each year hundreds of pounds were expended on noxious chemicals - which were appalling for the environment and, anyway, only worked for a week or so before the green cover returned. The digger was brought back to dredge the pond and remove rotting leaves and high nutrient vegetation - to no apparent effect. A boom was set up to push the algae towards the exit sluice when the wind was in the right direction - which was seldom. Thus father spent much of his declining years pacing the banks with a long handled net, Sisyphus-like, scooping out the green slime by hand.

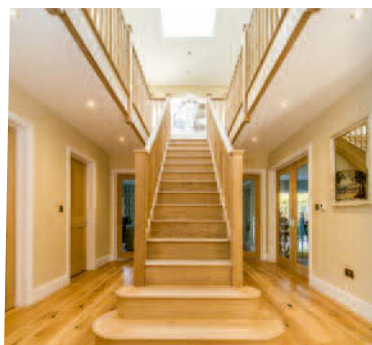
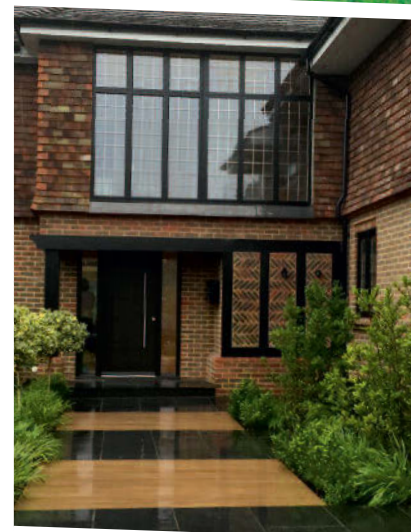
I determined on a different approach. Leave the algae to get on with it and celebrate a primeval-looking swamp next to the house. It's more Shrek than Gnome, but there's little point in waging such a futile war with nature. However if a Louisiana bayou is not what you have in mind for your Wealden cottage garden - then you are strongly advised against any attempt at a DIY pond!

KB





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Above: Tea and creativity: The Queen's Sapphire tea enjoyed by 150 Primary School guests with cream and jam donated by the Cream Tea Society; Magic and Music supporting St George's Church; Pottery by Colin Griffith, sculpture by Peter M. Clarke and paintings and drawings by Charlotte Molesworth showing as part of the South East Open Studios events
Front cover: Charlotte Molesworth with Colin Griffith at the South-East Open Studios exhibition. Photograph: Minnie Garnier