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Magazine
August 2019

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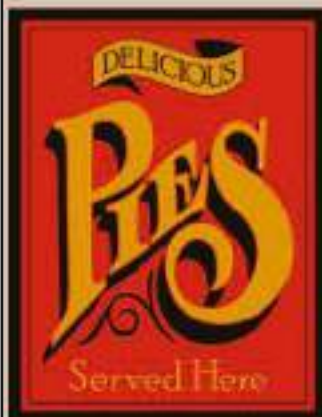
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Editorial



When a proper English country village is working well, it's a joy to behold. Of course, there will always be a bit of squabbling, maybe the occasional full and frank exchange of words, even a little internecine strife - all inevitable results of living at such close quarters with our neighbours - but when the cogs and wheels are aligned, there's no stopping us.

Very recently, our community shop announced that its finances were in rude health. They were so healthy, in fact - largely due to the efforts of a willing band of volunteers and the custom of a grateful village - that it had been able to donate a substantial sum to the building of the children's playground that recently opened its gates to Benenden's youngest.

The Parish Council donated as well, along with the Village Trust, several generous individuals and the Bonfire Society, whose excellent Guy Fawkes night festivities - again enormously well attended by Benendonians - meant they could also chip in to help the local Scout group, among others. In short, with some of us organising, chivvying and doing the donkey work, and others of us turning up, spending and enjoying ourselves - perhaps the most important part of the process - we seem to find ways to maintain this village as a shining example of a thriving community that manages to help itself when help is needed.

We on the Benenden Magazine are lucky to have so many acts of unbridled goodwill and selfless graft to report on every month, and this month is no exception. All the above is included in the August issue, and we hope to bring you a glowing report about the completion of the primary school build in time for the new academic year in September.

For those of you about to go off on your summer holidays, enjoy the break, but I just know you'll be pleased to come home.

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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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: David 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 4 August 8am Communion 10am All-age Communion 5pm Choral Evensong

Sunday 11 August 8am 1662 Communion 10am Morning Worship 5pm Evening Prayer
at Mission Church

Sunday 18 August 8am Communion 10am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 25 August 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

Baptism 13 July Henry Marks

Wedding 20 July Sophie-Marie Smith and Jamie Russell

Funeral 4 July Joy Bates

Rector's Letter



Benenden village fete - in support of St George's Church

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. What a great afternoon Saturday 15 June was. The village fete - in support of St George's Church - was another tremendous team effort and success. It was very hard work in the set-up, and breakdown afterwards, but all the hard work and effort was so worthwhile. It was a tremendous community event. So, thank you to everyone who came, had fun and put their hands in their pockets (more than ever, I reckon); thank you to those who ran the stalls, refreshments and entertainment; thank you to those who donated either their time, resources or prizes; thank you to the fete committee for making it happen. It was a wonderful, fun, village event, supported by our MP and, I'm told, Capt. Jack Sparrow - but I never saw him. You have probably heard that it also raised a record amount for the church funds. Thank you for that, too.

There are still some expenses to come in and outgoings to be settled, but so far we have made just over £10,500, our largest total ever and an incredible sum of money to raise in a four-hour village fete on The Green. Many, many other villages would, I'm sure, be green with envy at such a feat, but where does the money go? What does 'the church' do with it? Nearly £10.5k is a lot of cash, but to put it into perspective our running costs this year are just over £8.2k per month.

As I wrote last year, as briefly and simply as possible: it goes into the general fund of St George's Church account, which pays for the costs of running the church and towards its upkeep.

Our budget for 2019 is £98,700. This is up on last year as a result of our increased allocation to mission and maintaining the fabric of the church. As the contribution from our major fundraiser goes into the general, unrestricted fund, it is not possible to state specifically what the £10,500 raised at the fete will be spent on, but our outgoings for the running and upkeep of your village parish church are on such things as:

- The Diocesan Quota, known affectionately as the Parish Share, which covers things such as the incumbent's stipend (salary) and pension contributions, the training costs of current and future priests and lay people, the Diocesan running costs and staff costs, safeguarding and support of non-parish clergy (eg bishops and archdeacons). Benenden contributes £50,300 to the Diocese.
- Our day-to-day running costs (ie Rector's and office expenses, and assistance from other clergy); this year totals £9,850.
- The costs associated with worship (organ, piano, vestments, choir, Messy Church, etc) are £8,300.
- The running costs of the 'fabric' of the church - the building (insurance, churchyard maintenance, lighting/heating/water and minor repairs) totals £11,300 this year.
- Last year we gave away £5,650 to the work of other charities, locally, nationally and overseas.

As I said last year, people's opinions as to what the money should be spent on will differ, but all of these outgoings are important for the successful running of your village church. Thank you again for supporting the fete, for enjoying yourselves and, in the process, helping others.

Revd David Commander, Rector

Village Calendar

August

Wednesday 7	Benenden's Community Shop Volunteers' Evening, Benenden's Community Shop, 6.30pm	p.15
Friday 9	Toddler Group morning, Rectory garden, Benenden, 9am	p.9
Sunday 18	The Flower Farmers' Big Weekend, Blue Hen garden, Benenden, 2pm	p.13
Sunday 18	Harmsworth Court Service, Community Room, 4.30pm	
Tuesday 20	Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm	p.17
Tuesday 20	Iden Green and Benenden WI, Communities in Flux, Iden Green Pavilion, 2pm	p.17
Saturday 24	Churchyard Working Party, St George's, Benenden, 9.30-12noon	
Friday 30	Sound Tech Day for Teens, Benenden Village Hall, 10am	p.9

September

Friday 6	Woodland Wide Games, Iden Green Congregational Church, 7pm	
Sunday 8	Village Panto Auditions, Benenden Village Hall, 2.30pm	p.9
Saturday 14	Friends of Kent Churches, Ride + Stride for churches	p.15
Monday 16	Parish Council Meeting, Iden Green Pavilion, 7pm	
Friday 20	Weird and Wonderful Wines, Benenden School Café, 7pm	p.33
Saturday 28	The Benenden Revue, Benenden Village Hall, 7.30pm	p.9

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, April-September, on the recreation field, practice night, 6.30pm

Cakes & Chaos: Cafe and Toddler Group

Fridays during term time in St George's Church, 9-11.15am

Refuse Lorry Collections

Saturday 10 August for Garden/Compostable Waste

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

Saturday 24 August for Domestic Waste

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

Parish Council



I mentioned in my last letter that we were in the process of co-opting a new councillor, and it is with great pleasure that I can confirm that Stephen Cochrane has joined our team, and attended our meeting on 15 July, which was the first monthly meeting with a full team of councillors for quite some time, so a very warm welcome to Stephen. He will be writing in this magazine in the near future to introduce himself to those of you who don't already know him.

I have a couple of seasonal reminders, the first one for those of you who are lucky enough to live along The Street: please ensure that your hedges are trimmed sufficiently on the pavement side to allow pedestrians to meander along safely at all times. And secondly, at the risk of harming my carefully cultivated rock 'n' roll reputation: if you are minded to host a party during a warm summer's evening, please spare a thought for those who have less exciting lives and have consideration to the time when the music is turned off.

Those of you living along Walkhurst Road will hopefully have already been notified, but for the rest of us please note that due to essential works to the highway by Wedgewood Homes, Walkhurst Road will be closed just north of Rothermere Close and south of Pelham for ten days from 5 August until 15 August. Diversion routes will of course be given when the closure is in force.

We are currently in the process of putting together a Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) for KCC Highways, enabling us to highlight our specific highways problems and issues. Along with a reduction in speed limits throughout the parish, and specifically the entirety of Walkhurst Road to a 20mph limit, we are also proposing that a number of our lanes are given 'Quiet Lane' status, and details of their benefits can be found on www.cpre.org.uk/resources/transport/roads/item/1867-cpres-guide-to-quiet-lanes. Your opinions would be welcome on this and any highways issues you would like to highlight, and we will do our best to incorporate them in our HIP.

We will be discussing the HIP and other issues at our next meeting at 7pm on 16 September at Iden Green Pavilion. All welcome, please do come along. Enjoy the rest of your summer holidays.

Nicola Thomas, BPC Chair
01580 240364 nic.jthomas@btinternet.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
No meeting in August



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Just a Thought



He wears a red shirt

A couple of weekends ago we visited an old friend living in Smethwick, on the outskirts of Birmingham. The environment was very different from that which we experience around here. It was a cityscape to start with, and then there were the city dwellers. The church congregation on Sunday morning was made up of English, Indian, Pakistani, West African and East European members, though most of the service itself was in English and was followed by very friendly chatter all round. Out in the roads there was a strong Sikh presence and there were a good number of Muslims as well.

Our friend was keen to show us the area in which she had lived for most of her life. Travelling down the High Street we saw an old cinema which had been converted into a Sikh gurdwara, a Hindu temple built on a brownfield site and on the hilltop one of several Christian churches. The rows of small, busy shops were almost all Asian run, with the occasional window full of wonderful saris. How different the scene from that found here in West Kent. England is the country that I love - as someone recently said! - and that's no reason not to enjoy the diversity within it.

This visit brought to mind a conversation with one of my children many years ago. We were living in Blantyre, Malawi and one evening at supper my younger son asked if he could have his primary school friend David to play. I agreed that that would be fine and we would bring him home after school the next day. However I wanted to know if David needed taking back to his house afterwards. Most ex-pats had cars but many of the Malawians did not.

"Is David African?" I ask.

"I don't know," was the genuine reply.

"What is his second name?"

"I'm not sure."

Nothing for it, so I ask, "Is he black?"

My son thinks seriously for a minute or two then answers earnestly, "I don't know - but he wears a red shirt."

I cannot claim not to notice a person's colour but my response is to have so many thoughts. Are they British or here short term? Where are they from if not born in the UK? If they're black, have I been to their country? - I can clock up 15 or so but there is also the USA and the Caribbean. If originally from elsewhere in the world what interesting and different cultures do they have? - I have glimpsed several of them, too. Do they miss their ancestral country? Are they still in touch with people there? Do they like others to be interested?

If the observer is a child it is to be hoped that, although the boy he sees in the street might not be like him, it is the colour of his shirt that is the child's main concern. Other differences can be explored later.

Sue Fisher



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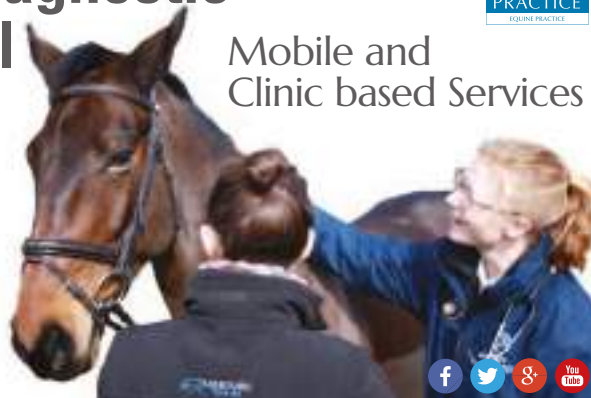
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News and Events

Grants for students and school leavers

The Gibbon and Buckland Charity, which started in 1602 with the gift of the school house at the foot of the Green, still gives some support to the primary school, but uses most of its income to give student grants. These are available for any young person under the age of 25 who is resident in, and has been resident in, the parish of Benenden for not less than three years and either in further education or in other ways getting prepared for working life.

Trustees will also consider applications for grants for gap year projects of educational worth.

Latest date for applications 30 September. If you could benefit, or know someone who could, please ask for an application form at Benenden's community shop, or from the clerk to the charity:

David Harmsworth, Clerk 240683
gibbonandbuckland@gmail.com

The Benenden Revue: for one night only

Saturday 28 September, Benenden Village Hall, 7.30pm

The next Benenden Revue is shaping up very nicely. Now a popular and regular event, this year's revue is packed full of music, songs, comedy and sing-alongs - all performed by our talented Benenden villagers.

Seating is cabaret style so bring nibbles or picnics, but no drinks please as there will be a bar. This is a fund raiser to improve the stage lighting for Benenden Players' events. Full details will be in the September magazine, but you can buy tickets now via www.benendenplayers.co.uk or in the village shop from 1 August. They cost just £5 and £3 for under 16s.



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Sound tech day for teens

Benenden Players are holding a one-day 'Introduction to Sound Technology' for 13-17-year olds on Friday 30 August in the village hall.

The day (10am-4pm) is run by professional sound engineer Simon Morris. Students will gain an introduction to sound; learn how a sound desk works; practice mixing and setting up levels to achieve the best results; and have some fun producing sound effects. They will end the day setting up and managing a live music session and running sound effects during a scripted scene.

There are just six places available at £20 each to ensure everyone has the best opportunity to learn and practice. Places will be allocated on a first come basis. Contact:
Ruth Clark 07767 261883
ruth@splashpr.co.uk

Toddler group morning

Friday 9 August, Rectory garden, Benenden, 9-12noon

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The Thoburn Playground - now open

It was with great fanfare and excitement on Saturday 6 July that the Thoburn Playground was declared open. Lots of children were there early, waiting (fairly) patiently outside the fence, and after a countdown from ten, burst excitedly in through the gate to explore the new play area.

By the squeals, energetic swinging, sliding, jumping and laughter all round, it looks like the new playground is a resounding success and it is fantastic to see so many children and families using the equipment, playing outside in

the sunshine and having fun. There are a few more items to be added in the coming weeks, including a village shop front for creative play, some sensory boards, an additional accessible picnic bench and a litter bin, so do watch out for these further enhancements.

The playground has been provided for all the community, and we need you to help us keep it clean and safe by following the rules indicated on the signage, using the litter bins or taking your litter home with you, and reporting any issues or concerns with the equipment to the clerk of the Benenden Village Trust on BVTclerk@gmail.com.

This project would not have been possible

without the people from the community who gave to our Play Benenden appeal, and we thank each and every one of you for your contributions - we hope you are pleased with the result. We especially thank Sarah and William Macpherson for their substantial donation and the suggestion for the name - the Thoburn Playground. We are extremely grateful to Benenden's community shop, the Benenden Bonfire Society, and Benenden Hospital for their generous contributions, and also to Benenden Parish Council and the Benenden Village Trust for their funding support and assistance.

Extra special mention should go to Kier Construction, who have been so incredibly supportive of our community project, assisting us with sourcing equipment and fencing, installation of extra items and signage, and general advice on how to approach the project. We cannot speak highly enough of their professional, friendly and helpful approach.

The project would also not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the Play Benenden committee, who put in so many hours of researching, planning, organising, and fundraising to successfully deliver such a fantastic playground for children and families in and around Benenden. So a heartfelt thank you goes to Katy Marshall, Athena Cripps, Tom Gray, Lucy Watkins and Beth Astridge.

Play Benenden

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**.

www.helengrant.org

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

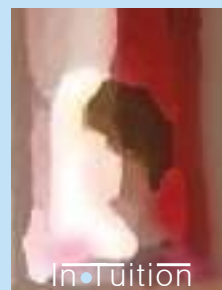


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Village hall highlights

David Orchard returns with his very popular teak garden furniture sale on Sunday 4 August between 10am and 4pm. All the outdoor furniture is made of fully sustainable, Indonesian kiln-dried teak which has then been fine sanded on every surface until smooth as silk. The full range is maintenance-free and can withstand all weather conditions.

There is a really exciting event taking place on Sunday 11 August from 4pm to 6pm for all aspiring singers, in aid of Shelter (a charity that campaigns to end homelessness and bad housing). In conjunction with Maddie4Music and Jewel Performing Arts, you will learn, perform and record Alex Woolf's two-part new song 'A Place to Call Home', which you can share on social media to help raise money for Shelter via JustGiving. Lots of other singing groups throughout the country will be taking part and you will also be able to attend the free event on Wednesday 30 October at the London Coliseum, with chorus and orchestra, to record the song. Hopefully it will be number one for Christmas. The cost is £6, with proceeds after costs going straight to Shelter. Email maddie4music@btinternet.com to register.

Charlotte Hudson is running her popular dance workshops throughout the summer. There are only a few spaces left, so do contact charlotte@charlottehudsonschoolofdance.com.

A couple of our drop-in classes will still be operating throughout the summer. Monday and Thursday mornings we have power yoga and Tuesday evenings there is ballroom dancing.

Cwnsaethu dog behaviour and training also continue to run courses throughout the summer, and hopefully they can turn your unruly four-legged friend into a well-behaved one.

The Farmers' Market in the village hall:

Tuesday 6 August, 9-11am

Tuesday 13 August, 9-11am

Tuesday 20 August, 9-11am

www.benendenvillagehall.org

Lorraine Jones 07419 989830

enquiries@benendenvillagehall.org



As part of **The Flower Farmers' Big Weekend**

On **Sunday 18 August** from **2-5pm** do come to the **Blue Hen garden** Hinksden Road, Benenden.

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look around, **talk** sowing and growing,
or just **relax** in the garden.

There will be **tea and homemade cake**.

Parking in the field above. If it rains it will be cancelled.

Mr Noah's new future

Exciting times are coming for Mr Noah's Nursery School of Iden Green. After 25 years the nursery school, with its distinct ethos and philosophy, is looking for a new home.

Mr Noah's offers a wonderful nurturing environment where numbers are kept low to ensure the staff-to-child ratio remains outstanding. There is a focus on children's wellbeing and development of self-regulation and creativity, while its forest school enables the children to explore and experience the natural world through hands-on activities outdoors.

Finding a new site takes on even greater significance when at least four other local nurseries have closed in the last 18 months. We want to ensure that there is sufficient high quality nursery provision for the children in our community and we are looking forward to a happy future where more children will benefit from a gentle and loving start.

If anyone has any ideas or knows of any available space, we would love to hear about them. The New Start steering committee consists of Peter Michell, Clare Griffiths and Victoria Ede.

revpmichell@mrnoahs.org



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Talking Shop

Finances rosy but no room for complacency

Members met in the Memorial Hall for the annual general meeting and, having been greeted with Sally-Ann's delicious freshly baked scones as well as strawberries and cream, we took our seats to listen to the reports for the last year, led by Paul Tolhurst's sparkling introduction and Martin Pexton's very positive financial report, which was music to our ears. It seems Benenden's is thriving.

During the financial year, with a healthy cash balance, we were able to spend £20,500 on capital equipment, including fridges, chillers, freezers, microwave oven, air conditioning and chairs. Also, many of you will have noticed how spruced up we are now that much of the décor has been repainted; Ken Anderson must be warmly congratulated on his untiring devotion to sorting out all these changes, as the shop and café look great. The kitchen received a major overhaul, which has greatly improved the effectiveness of food preparation, and we found ourselves in the fortunate position of being able to give a donation towards the new children's playground.

Nowadays we often find ourselves being asked for advice by other start-up community shops, as we have become something of a flagship organisation. Am I blowing our trumpet? Yes. What we have in Benenden's is special and precious. Scarcely a day goes by when customers don't comment on the wonderful atmosphere. Mel Harris, our gifted manager, has led and encouraged a great team for four years and it seems in many ways that the venture has been going for longer. It hasn't all been plain sailing, however, particularly with prolonged staff absence due to illness, but with more diverse training for all managers we are putting into place better ways of dealing with that in the future.

Finally to all you volunteers, without whom it would not be possible: thank you. We have 60 registered volunteers of whom 40 are regulars. These people make it possible to

The logo features the words 'RIDE+STRIDE' in large, bold, orange letters with a blue outline, and 'for Churches' in smaller green letters below it. To the left is a blue graphic of a bicycle wheel and a path.

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- Why not plan a route with your friends and family?
- Visit your church to pick up a sponsorship form and list of participating churches.
- Find some sponsors to pledge money for this important local cause.

You can sign in at your first church from 10am onwards and visit as many churches as you like.

Safety on the roads is paramount. We recommend high visibility vests.

For more information contact Alison Prall
240417 alisonprall40@gmail.com

provide the service we give, but at the risk of repeating myself, we really can't be complacent. Our net profit margin is about four per cent - not sufficient to make a living from the shop without the volunteers - and in the future we will need to factor in an increase in overhead costs. We warmly welcome new helpers and urge you to come forward so we can continue to thrive. Don't be shy. It's great fun and you'll be amazed at how many new friends you'll make and new skills you'll learn.

The next volunteers evening will be on Wednesday 7 August at 6.30pm in the shop, and anyone who is contemplating joining us, do please come along.

Bev Beveridge

Benenden Bonfire Society

We are pleased to confirm that the Benenden Scout Group will be receiving £2,534 towards improvements inside the Scout Hut. This is in addition to awards allocated to other recipients published in the May magazine, and makes a total distribution of £7,894.00 from the 2018 Benenden village Bonfire and Fireworks event.

Grant Matthews

Chair, Benenden Bonfire Society



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Iden Green and Benenden WI

Creative talents emerged at our latest informal gathering where, apart from a delightfully inspiring picture made from lace, a wonderful bedspread, a wooden pig made at Denman College and other fascinating creations, some resourceful ladies had made cakes. We were also entertained by our poets: one who unfailingly delivers a very polished and professional performance, read two of her works; the other, who has helped at the church fete for over 38 years, treated us to a poem about the event. We also welcomed another new member.

Hockey sticks were 'thrown in the air' when Mrs Aston gave an enthralling talk on the fashion, food, hierarchy and history of various UK girls' boarding schools seen through the eyes of diverse writers such as Angela Brazil, Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë and Enid Blyton. The talk was illustrated by pictures of girls in their school uniforms (some from Benenden School) demonstrating some of the dramatic changes that have occurred since Victorian times. Our federation advisor also read us her report on the Brighton annual meeting.

The Iden Green Pavilion will be the venue for our 20 August meeting, when Mr J Hill will introduce the theme of Communities in Flux, starting at 2pm. The meeting will be open to visitors and anyone wishing to come along should contact a WI member.

Jackie Liffen 752232 WI@daisystar.co.uk

Iden Green Pavilion Trust

Volunteers are needed to join the management committee of the pavilion, which serves as Iden Green's village hall and community centre. The committee of eight trustees generally meets four times a year and ensures, among other things, that this excellent facility is maintained to a high standard and its use is for the benefit of the residents of Iden Green and its neighbourhood. If you would like to help, or for more information, please contact:

Bill Lewis 243093 birdseye48@hotmail.com

Neighbourhood Development Plan

The NDP was first published as a rough draft on 23 February, inviting suggestions and comments from residents and other stakeholders. Since then, the plan has been extensively rewritten; we haven't altered any of the main site allocations, but we have checked planning regulations to ensure that our plan complies with relevant laws and guidelines, and we have also established that alternative sites would not meet the approval of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty management unit or satisfy the priorities within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Benenden Parish Council approved the revised NDP on 15 July and the next stage of consultation will begin on 5 August. This revised document is called the 'Regulation 14 Plan', which can be downloaded from the NDP website, and we have made a few hard copies available in the community shop and parish office for those who do not have internet access. If you wish to comment on it, please contact Caroline Levett (NDPReg14@benendenparishcouncil.org) who as clerk to the Parish Council will coordinate feedback.

The Regulation 14 consultation is open for a minimum of six weeks. The closing date for comments will be Monday 21 September. Once the consultation has closed, the NDP team will review feedback, make further adjustments and then publish the Regulation 15 Plan, probably in November.

Paul Tolhurst, Chair, NDP Chair

Village lunch

Tuesday 20 August, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm

Our village lunch costs £5, is open to all ages and everybody is welcome. If you would like to come along, or if you enjoy cooking and would like to join the band of volunteers, we would love to hear from you.

Genevieve Greenwood 240526

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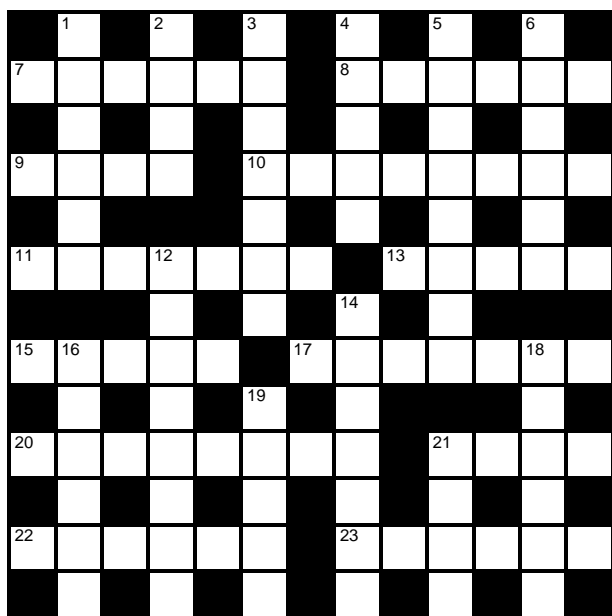
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CROSSWORD No14 (Tricky)



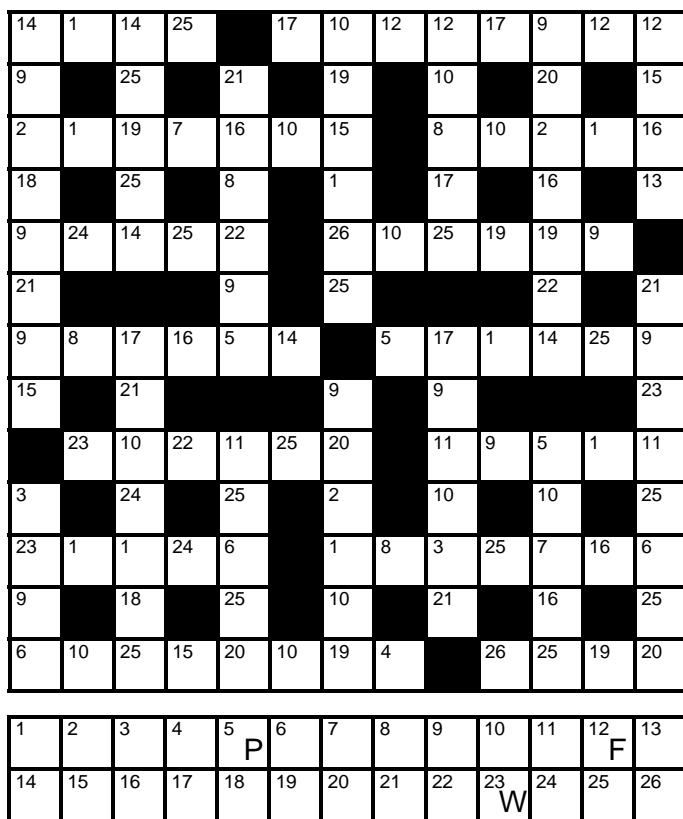
Across

- 7 Dad ties his boots in some style (6)
- 8 What am last letter? Surprised? (6)
- 9 He has Buddhist chant in his house (4)
- 10 Ric for Parliament shock! (8)
- 11 EEC do PR very badly going forward (7)
- 13 Carries large mammal (5)
- 15 Eisenhower in coarse untruth cycles (5)
- 17 Surgeon with ear, nose and throat is in alcoholic haze (7)
- 20 Awfully grim area for some; for others, bliss (8)
- 21 Sun keeps going down (4)
- 22 Harsh, breaking links with Europe (6)
- 23 Sol's alien heralds nightfall? (6)

Down

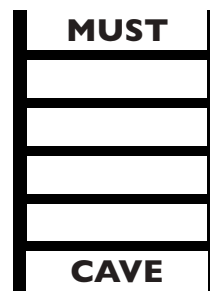
- 1 Give V.C. what for (6)
- 2 A step towards peace? (4)
- 3 Lift alien in 23? A little harey! (7)
- 4 Sent document telephonically. Nothing crossed editor's desk (5)
- 5 Unsure atheists act in the most precipitate manner (8)
- 6 Sounds like an old Spanish gent? (6)
- 12 Quash her cries with fruit (8)
- 14 Make free to rent once more (7)
- 16 Pictures I take a long time to get ready for (6)
- 18 Where Sol goes after 23? (6)
- 19 Brooch making brief appearance? (5)
- 21 Symbolic wave? (4)

CODEWORD No14 (Tricky)



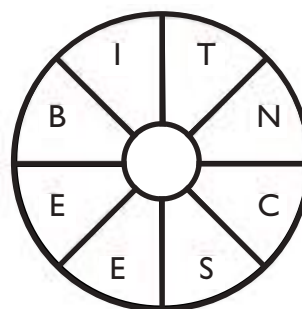
Each number represents a letter. Break the code and complete the grid. Three letters have been given to help you.

STEP CHANGE



Change the word at the foot of the ladder into the word at the top by altering only one letter at a time.

NINE FROM EIGHT



Find the missing letter at the centre of the wheel to create a nine-letter word. **CLUE:** Leave it out!



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Bowls, burgers, beer and baps

Benenden Bowls Club welcomed Benenden Old Dads (the BODs) for an evening of lawn bowls on the first Friday in July. This much-loved village tradition started some years ago, but it's not all about the bowls - it's an evening to bowl a few woods, sink a few beers and bolt a burger or two from the barbecue. The annual BODs evening has introduced one or two new members to the club over the years and it is great to see the young, and not so young, dads mixing it with the club regulars.

Given that every meet at the club does not necessarily mean an opportunity for a beer and a burger, what is it then that is attractive about playing bowls? As relative newcomers to bowls, my wife Jane being in her second year as club president, we appreciate greatly the sense of fun, comradery and gentle competition which is a feature of every practice or competitive event. And then there are Sal's match teas ...

Bowls is a great leveller, one does not need to be young and athletic to become good at it, and while some have a natural talent for the game others can get good, or at least better, at it by engaging in some practice. Of course, there is also room for some luck, as there is with every sport, so who knows you could win or come second in your first club competition - it has been known.

Belonging to a group and taking gentle exercise in the outdoors is known to be good for both mental and physical health. Meeting and getting to know fellow villagers is what living in Benenden is all about and what better way to do that than on the well-tended bowls lawn. Oh, and did I mention Sal's match teas?

Our home fixtures for August are:
Sunday 4 Kenward Trophy at 2.30pm
Saturday 17 v Northiam at 2.30pm
Sunday 18 Memorial Trophy at 2.30pm
Saturday 24 v Pembury at 2.30pm
Peter Ellis

Benenden Village Trust news

The new playground in Benenden is proving to be very popular and has received many compliments. It is the result of heart-warming cooperation and enthusiasm from so many, starting with the Play Benenden initiative and ending with the removal of the protective fencing provided by Keir as part of a valuable contribution to the community. We appeal to all to play a part in ensuring that it serves us well for many years to come - the equipment carries a 30-year guarantee, but that is conditional on it being used only as intended. Sorry - not for adults!

But what about those who have outgrown the playground? What facilities are missing in Benenden and Iden Green that your Village Trust might be able to provide? The original gift was for allotments, playing fields, a working men's club and a parish room; but times and needs change and over the years the allotments became housing, the fields now incorporate the village hall, the pavilion, tennis courts and a bowling green. What are the needs now and in the coming years?

As we continue to manage the existing assets, we shall also be open to new ideas; do air them.

David Harmsworth, Chair

www.benendenvillagetrust.org

Benenden Pre-School news

As always, the school year feels like it has flown by and we wave goodbye to another group of children who will soon be taking their next step to 'big school'. It has been a busy last few weeks, with the mini Olympics taking place on the last Wednesday morning of term. The leavers' celebration also took place, which is always an emotional and exciting time, but we wish them all the best of luck for the future.

The open day was also a success, so thank you to everyone who donated toys, cakes, helped out and came along to enjoy the fun.
supervisor@benendenpre-school.co.uk

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Benenden School news

The final week of the academic year is always enjoyable, but this year was a blend of traditional events with some interesting changes.

We held our end-of-year Mark Reading in the Speech Day Marquee, because we are currently operating without a school hall during the construction process to build a new hall and music school. Although the change was necessary it was nevertheless an extremely enjoyable one.

The other notable change was the Arts Festival which we held across the penultimate weekend. We took the decision to move the festival to later in the term because the exams began earlier than usual but, perhaps in hindsight, this was a fortuitous necessity because the festival was undoubtedly successful.

It was our biggest festival yet; the weather was wonderful and I was stunned by the sheer quality and range of the activities and events on offer. It was lovely to see members of the village joining us for parts of the festival and we hope to welcome even more of our friends from Benenden and surrounding villages as the event becomes more established in the coming years.

We were also pleased to have left the Speech Day Marquee up for longer than usual to accommodate the Army Benevolent Fund's Summer Musical Party.

Other notable events here at school over the summer include the traditional village tennis tournament and several longstanding holiday lets, with children from South America, Austria and the Kent Music School making use of the Benenden campus.

Samantha Price, Headmistress

Hospice in the Weald musical event

Tuesday 17 September, 3pm

Alexander Karpeyev will be playing Borodin, Liadov, Tchaikovsky and other treasures from his Russian homeland. Tickets by donation (minimum £16). Reservations in advance only: Gillian Davis 850384

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: Iden Green Tennis Club



When: Friday Term Time groups from 5pm onwards



How much: £6 per session



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

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

Benenden Hospital news

Welcome to the first of my monthly updates from Benenden Hospital. I'm immensely proud to tell you that we have become the first private hospital in the UK to be awarded the prestigious Anaesthesia Clinical Services Accreditation (ACSA) from the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA).

The ACSA accreditation promotes quality improvement and the highest professional standards of anaesthetic service. To receive it, we had to demonstrate high standards in areas such as patient experience, patient safety and clinical leadership.

We continually strive to ensure we provide the highest quality of care for our patients and achieving this accreditation is testament to the hard work of our staff and consultants. Anaesthesia may not always be at the forefront of patients' minds when having a surgical procedure, but it is so important to patient safety and a good recovery.

We are proud and privileged to be the first private hospital to achieve this award and will continue to work with the Royal College of Anaesthetists to maintain these exacting standards.

Jane Abbott, Hospital Director



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Teenagers break 250-year record
with century partnership

Benenden Cricket Club has enjoyed a very successful first half of the season, winning more than we have lost and enjoying every moment of it. Our toughest match so far was the away fixture against the Mote, which saw our hosts amassing a daunting 268-2. We battled valiantly in defeat, but not before Ben Collins and Copter Brunt both notched impressive half centuries.

Two players went one better and hit centuries. Stephen Message scored 107 not out against East Sutton in a 58-run win with Copter picking up three wickets, but the highlight of the season so far, was our performance against Bilsington CC. With Benenden in trouble at 40-4, William Goodard and William Brunt put on a 105 partnership for the fifth wicket off only 80 deliveries to set up a comprehensive 76-run victory. It was the first time that two teenagers (both aged 14) have made a century stand for the club. More impressively, William Goodard went on to complete an unbeaten 108 (from 72 balls faced), thus becoming the youngest ever centurion for Benenden, breaking a record dating back to 1750. Congratulations to both Williams.

The other highlight was our annual fixture against the parents of Benenden Pre and Primary School, with match fees and funds from a raffle and barbecue being donated to the school. The match was a close affair with the club just stealing victory. In other matches we secured victories against Teston by three wickets (Peter Newman 30, Richard Brunt five wickets); a nail-biting win against Mountfield CC and a heavy loss by 98 runs against Smallhythe

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

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

For more information please visit:
www.benendencricket.com

If interested in playing, please contact our Club Captain,
Richard Brunt on:
07834 572838 or email bruntyhk@hotmail.com



after a disappointing batting collapse saw Benenden skittled out for 98.

Outside our regular weekend matches, the Benenden Bullets have run a highly successful series of mid-week 20/20 fixtures. These family-friendly games have been a perfect platform for new players to be introduced to the club, to experience cricket for the first time, or for parents to play the game with their sons or daughters. A big thank you to Barry Basset for his hard work to arrange these matches as well as be the chef at Boundary BBQs.

If you would like to know more about the club, wish to volunteer or want to join as a player, please contact me.

Our fixtures for August are:
Saturday 3 v East Sutton A at 2pm
Saturday 10 v Rolvenden A at 2pm
Saturday 17 v Smarden H at 1pm
Saturday 31 v Matfield A at 1pm
Richard Brunt, Club Captain
bruntrichard@btinternet.com

MINDBENDERS

Answers

CROSSWORD No 14

Across: 7 Palace, 8 Amazed, 9 Home, 10 Electric, 11 Proceed, 13 Bears, 15 Bikes, 17 Dentist, 20 Marriage, 21 Sunk, 22 Severe, 23 Sunset
Down: 1 Valour, 2 Pace, 3 Leveret, 4 Faxed, 5 Hastiest, 6 Senior, 12 Cherries, 14 Release, 16 Images, 18 Sunbed, 19 Cameo, 21 Sine

NINE FROM EIGHT

ABSTINENT

STEP CHANGE

MUST, MAST, VAST, VASE, VALE, BALE

1	O	2	J	3	S	4	G	5	P	6	Y	7	Q	8	B	9	A	10	I	11	K	12	F	13	X
14	T	15	U	16	R	17	M	18	N	19	D	20	H	21	C	22	W	23	Z	24	E	25	V	26	

CODEWORD No 14



Savour the simple pleasure of cycling

Giles Clark on the joys of two-wheel travel

Growing up I rode a bike on a regular basis. In the late '60s/early '70s it was my daily transport to and from school, to swimming club, Scouts, friends and pretty much anywhere else I wanted to go. No Lycra, no helmet and a voluminous cycling cape for wet weather that worked very well.

My regular commute however, paled into insignificance to the mileage clocked up by an elderly relative who I rode with occasionally. He thought nothing of setting off for the day and covering 40 or 50 miles and arriving home for tea. It was a day out, an expedition, a chance to meet up with friends and share experiences. He didn't wear Lycra either, rather favouring tweed jacket, cavalry twills and brogues - oh and a tie.

That idea of the bike as a means of transport for all seems to have gone. Flicking through lifestyle magazines today it would seem mandatory to wear special gear, have drop handlebars or huge mountain bike tyres. The bicycle has moved from being a truly wonderful method of transport and exploration to a sporting endeavour. How sad is that?

My suggestion is that we reclaim cycling as

a way to get around, to do the shopping, to go to the pub, to visit friends. It works well in the Netherlands and Denmark where cycling as an everyday mode of transport represents 36% and 23% of daily journeys respectively. It's not only the obvious countries that have a notable level of bicycle use as a regular mode of daily transport: Germany, Belgium, Finland, Sweden and Hungary all report bike usage of over 10%.

There is a raft of benefits both personal and collective that come from high levels of bike use. Environmentally, bikes produce 21g CO₂/passenger/km travelled. Compare that to 271g for passenger cars and 101g for busses. Health benefits are also pretty convincing; cyclists on average live two years longer than non-cyclists and take 15% fewer days off work through illness. An adult who cycles regularly will typically have a level of fitness equivalent to being ten years younger. Countries with the highest levels of cycling and walking generally have the lowest obesity rates.

I could go on, but you get the idea.

So, what about here in Benenden, in the Weald of Kent? Certainly, national and local government, together with charities and NGOs,



are pushing the cycling agenda. Believe it or not, Kent County Council has a Cycling Strategy, delivered through its nine borough councils - Benenden falls under the plan outlined by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC).

The TWBC statement of intent is clear: “to make cycling a normal part of everyday life in the borough, by creating a safe and welcoming environment for cyclists of all ages and abilities.” The plan is ambitious and the full report TWBC Cycling Strategy 2016-20 is worth reading in full. The strategy includes a network of high-quality cycle routes to be completed in the urban areas of Royal Tunbridge Wells, Southborough, Paddock Wood and Cranbrook. These are utility routes for transport, for day-to-day commuting.

The plans also highlight the potential for

reducing congestion through cycling. Currently in England over 40% of all journeys made are less than two miles, and almost 70% are less than five miles; of which 69% are made by car. We can see that locally, notably at school times. The potential for reducing that traffic load is huge. Imagine if just 25% of the 4x4s that currently do the school run were exchanged for bikes.

We also have National Cycle Network (NCN) route 18 virtually running through the village. The route is 61 miles long and links Canterbury to Tunbridge Wells, most of it on quiet lanes, but some of it off road. You can hop on NCN 18 and leave Cranbrook and run down Park Lane right through to Bedgebury, much of which is described as traffic-free.

The NCN is set up and delivered by the charity Sustrans (www.sustrans.org.uk) which has developed a national interlinked network of cycle routes and continues to explore options to make it easier for people to walk and cycle.

One of the projects the charity looked at locally is the development of a greenway linking Tenterden with Headcorn using the route of the old railway. The original work on the route was set out in 2008, but there was little political will to see the route developed. Now, things may have changed.

Perhaps the late John F. Kennedy just about hit the nail on the head when he said “nothing

compares to the simple pleasure of riding a bike”. This is not about disenfranchising motorists. Motorists and cyclists are the same people looking for the best transport solution. Sometimes that may be by car but on other occasions it could well be by bike.



Pilgrimage to Rome in a Rolls-Royce

Peter Massey recalls the highlights of a recent road trip to Rome at the wheel of his 82-year-old pride and joy

Little Ethel is a Rolls-Royce 25/30 touring saloon which coach builders Hooper built specially for the Geneva Motor Show in 1937. She's marked up in kilometres and litres as well as imperial measures, denoting the intent to be used on the continent, which was where I was taking her.

I imagined Alfred the Great worked out the shortest route to walk from Canterbury to Rome when he trekked there in the year 853, and the Via Francigena is still well marked for motorists, so I aimed to take the French 'N' roads down to Lausanne and aim for the easiest pass, down the Sion Valley to Simplon, along Lake Maggiore and follow in Alfred's footsteps.

I headed through the tunnel on 29 March, a carefully chosen date, having paid the equivalent of one year's membership of the EU for a photo and an international driving licence. I stopped in Reims and the next day the trip to Lausanne was an absolute joy. The roads were empty, sweeping or straight, easily coping with 100km/hour, not



too many roundabouts or villages. The pilgrim's route through Châlons, St Dizier, Chaumont, Langrès, Gray, Besançon and Pontarlier was fabulous and marked by magnificent spires.



When road tripping, sometimes you want to carry on or stay in a place you've discovered.

Wherever I stopped I went for a run to recce the town and stretch the legs and I aimed to book a hotel mid-afternoon for each night.

Driving into Lausanne, the ignition light came on. When all else fails, read the manual. The 25/30 manual is a joy in its detail, and the troubleshooting page solved the problem within two minutes. The fuses were all intact but the shunt in the fuse box needed a gentle tap and the problem was cleared and didn't come back.

Day three brought the Alps. There are things an 82-year-old lady shouldn't be asked to do, and this was one of them. The car-train from Brig to Iselle on the Italian border was like a toy version of Eurotunnel; the tiny tunnel is just wide enough.



Day four and Italy brought a new challenge. Kent has wheel-breaking potholes, but 'SS' roads in Italy take the prize. I couldn't bear to hear the old lady's knees creaking and got back on the autostrada, turning south to La Spezia, determined to see a bit of Tuscany regardless.

After a fight with the satnav around Livorno and Pisa, I eventually got onto some smoother back roads up through the Tuscan hills to Volterra. Grinning, tooting and chatting are the great joys of these road trips in an old lady. Cars slow down to get pictures, people approach at every stop for a chat, kids sit in to have their picture taken. Endless photographs and selfies are taken from every angle.

People remind you how lucky you are to be the temporary custodian of these senior citizens. How special is the Rolls-Royce Spirit of Ecstasy, or Spirit of Ethel as my youngest daughter Beth pronounced it, giving our first proper car Big Ethel her name. It makes people smile with generous praise. "Bellissima" was a constant call. Every traffic light is a chorus of smiles and questions.

One of my favourite games is to look serious if someone touches the paintwork and demand they clean it - easily done because I mean it! I hand them the cloth whilst winking at their friends or relatives who wet themselves laughing while catching the moment on their phones, until the victim realises!

After a rest day, day five was a short hop to Rome to the Majestic Hotel on the Via Veneto. My wife Siobhan had flown in to join me in the city and the weekend was spectacular. We were virgin rallygoers and somewhat nervous about what one entails, but were welcomed from the outset and made new friends.

Too soon it was time to return. Up the coast route to Genoa and a night in Piedmont, followed by the Simplon train, lunch in Montreux



and onward to Besançon. With 400 miles remaining the question was to take three days or four? Ethel was happy but I needed an easier run, so I stopped in Epernay next door to Chateau Pierry, where Monsieur Gobilliard makes delightful champagnes.

The final day involved an amazing cross-country drive to the old Reims-Gueux circuit for a photo shoot and more chats with petrolheads there on the same pilgrimage.

Once home in the UK, Little Ethel and I had completed 2,840 miles in all. These pre-war cars were made to be continental travelers after all.



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Young Diccon in Cumbria

Spotlight on: Diccon Gray

"I'm not really all that good," Diccon Gray says to me for the fourth time in our conversation.

"OK" I say, "So why you were selected to play for England?"

"Well it's just based on rankings, appearances and tournaments entered, that's all."

"Diccon," I say, checking my notes, "last June you played in the World Veterans Championships in Las Vegas; 7,000 competitors and, in the over 55s age category, you made the last 32. Last month you played in the European Veterans Tournament in Budapest and this month, will represent England, in Holland, and will start with a recent highest England (over 40s) ranking of 15 ..."

"Well, yes, but ..."

Diccon's passion for table tennis seems matched only by his modesty for, despite his protestations, he has been active in the sport at the highest level since he was a teenager. Thanks to a charismatic woodwork teacher who made table tennis tables, installed them in his school and proceeded to coach the youngsters there, Diccon's hometown of Millom, in Cumbria, gained something of a reputation for turning out star players. News clippings spanning 40 years of his table tennis career are testament to the prowess of the Cumbrian teens, who travelled the country thrashing all-comers.

Since then, Diccon has been obsessed with the sport; working for its governing body for over 25 years, representing teams at national and international level and, having played in a

bewildering variety of categories and leagues, it's fair to say that table tennis (or "Ping-Pong", as he absolutely insists on calling it), is his passion. Although a one-on-one contest that gets the adrenaline going and provides a heart-pumping workout, Diccon is committed to the belief that his sport offers a great deal in the way of team and character-building, encouraging performance under pressure, as well as opportunities for focussed tactical thinking:

two hundred million Chinese can't be wrong.

What began as 'wiff-waff' - a parlour diversion for the wealthy in 18th-century London - has been absorbed into practically every institution in the world. The unmistakable rhythmic ring of plastic bouncing between rubber and wood resounds through hundreds (if not, thousands) of sixth form centres, university bars, youth-clubs, leisure centres, works' canteens, office basements and village halls; including Benenden's. Diccon was instrumental in setting up Benenden Table Tennis Club which, as he puts it, "outgrew the hall" moved to the High Weald Academy in Cranbrook and is now based at Claremont School, Bodiam. Benenden remains fortunate that the club donated two full-sized table tennis tables to the village, both of which await someone with vision and enthusiasm to set up another club in Benenden.

Diccon, of course, was "... not really all that good ..." so we may get someone better to run it this time; but I'm not holding my breath.

The Weald TTC welcomes all comers.

For further details contact:

Ken Muhr, Coach 752676

Russell Cruse



Diccon Gray in action today



Food & Drink

From Portugal to Provence: the rosé revolution

When I first joined the wine trade in 1975, very few rosé wines adorned the shelves of supermarkets or wine merchants, so I grew up watching my mother down many glasses/bottles of Mateus rosé. The history of Mateus goes back to 1942, when the founder of Portuguese wine company Sogrape, Fernando van Zeller Guedes, launched a visionary concept: a new kind of wine, rosé, slightly sparkling with a unique flavour and a strong identity reflected in an innovative bottle inspired by the hip flasks used by soldiers in World War I. Over 75 years later, Mateus rosé is a truly global brand, present in more than 120 countries with over one billion bottles sold.

I remember it coming in wooden cases, the bottles wrapped in straw. The early wine bars used to stick a candle in an empty bottle and place it on the table, all part of a romantic evening for many couples, but it now has new packaging, and can be found in most supermarkets in the country, priced around the £5.75 and probably on promotion at £4.99. It is fresh, young, still with a gentle sparkle and light in alcohol at 9%.

The choice of rosé back in the day was Mateus, Anjou (medium sweet, a generally sickly style) and the dry

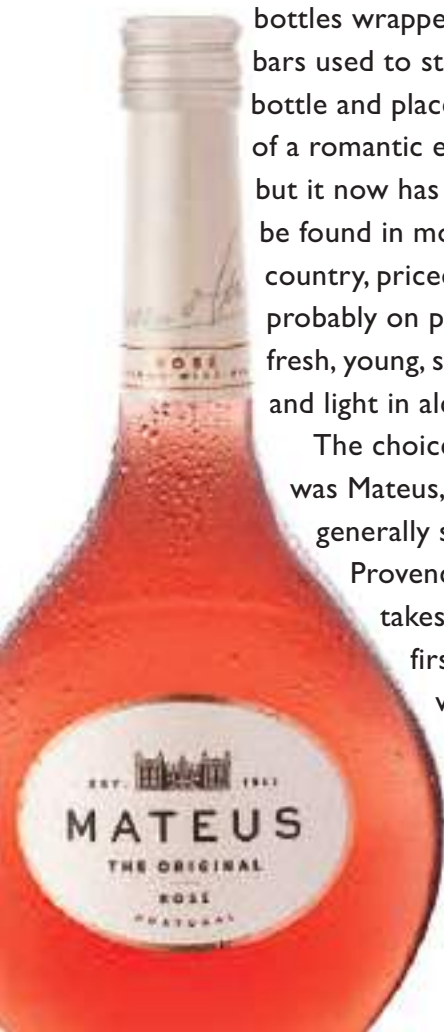
Provence variety, which now takes centre stage, but let's first consider how rosé wines in general are produced? Saignee or bleeding is used to make the best quality rosés. Red grapes are

placed into a tank and the weight of the grapes enables them effectively to press themselves, with the juice in contact with the grape skins for a very short time - the longer the juice is on the skins, the darker the colour. Presse or pressing is the technique of pressing the red grapes until the juice has the desired colour. When the colour is right, the pressing stops and the resultant juice is drawn off to ferment.

Cotes de Provence rosés are now so much in vogue that the region is running out of wine, and an application has been made to increase the vineyard size by 300ha, from a current area of just under 27,000ha, which on average produces about 180 million bottles per year, with about 550 producers and 100 negociants. The grapes used are principally Grenache and Cinsault, with Mourvedre, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah also in the mix, while about 20% of white varieties can also be used to provide acidity and delicacy.

The wines are pale in colour and the paler the better is the current trend, which seems to be extremely popular with consumers. The Benenden community shop stocks the Rose de Sophie Cotes de Provence 2018 from the Famille Sumeire, a blend of Grenache and Carignan which at 12.5% alcohol/volume is dry, with crisp, fresh acidity, fine minerality and hints of blossom and stone fruits. I'd say it is a benchmark of the style, on the shelves at £12.25, but remember, one should not drink rosé wines too cold - the ideal temperature is about 11-15 degrees C. Colder than this will take out much of the flavour; too warm and the alcohol comes to the fore.

Personally I prefer rosés with a



bit more complexity and a deeper colour, so I could not finish this article without mentioning the best-selling rosé in the community shop, from my dear friends at Domaine de Pellehaut in Montreal du Gers, Gascony. Martin and Mathieu Beraut make theirs by the saignee method, with a longer maceration time giving a darker tone and more nuance. A blend of local grapes - Merlot, Tannat, Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec - and Syrah from the Rhone, it is fruit driven, a strawberries and cream style: a real bargain at £7.95.

Weird and wonderful Our next tasting in the village will take drinkers 'off piste' into the world of exotic grapes. We'll sample nine fascinating wines from unusual sources, with drinks on arrival and excellent food. It will be at the Benenden School café on Friday 20 September, strictly limited to just 40 places, tickets on sale soon in the community shop, cost £15.

Tracy Claridge

Farmer Brown went to the village hall instead ...

Last month marked a milestone for Benenden with the launch of the farmers' market at the village hall. We'll now have a chance to shop from over 15 local stallholders offering fruit, vegetables, freshly-baked bread, hand-reared meat, deli goods, home-made preserves, confectionery and local crafts.

Farmers' markets take us back to a time when we bought our food locally, with no guilt about food miles or single-use plastic, and help us reconnect with seasonality and the realities of food production.

I talked with market manager Lindy Alton about establishing the market in Benenden. She manages similar events at Rolvenden, Brede, and Peasmarsh, and was excited by the opportunity to start a new one, especially as launching a Benenden farmers' market was one of the most popular ideas in the 2015 Parish Plan, supported by over 70% of residents. Alongside running her own stall (hand-made sweets and preserves) Lindy organises and promotes each market,

scheduling stallholders and ensuring everyone's on top of the latest regulations. But the most important aspect is the atmosphere: "It's all about personal service, that smile on your face and a chance to chat directly with your customers," she says.

Farmers' markets enable local producers to meet local consumers and other producers. They can chat, get feedback, test out new ideas, and promote and grow their business. Importantly there are no middle men taking much of the profits. Lindy enthused about the family atmosphere amongst stallholders, helping each other out and sharing initiatives.

Research (Campaign for the Protection of



Rural England) suggests farmers' markets improve the sustainability of the local economy by keeping local businesses alive, and with Benenden's, our local community shop, sourcing much of their produce from nearby specialist suppliers, this represents another way to buy in a green and parish-friendly fashion.

Lorraine Jones from the village hall has worked hard with Lindy on the initiative. She said: "I'm so pleased to bring this regular feature here. When I became hall administrator in 2016 it was the one thing I really wanted to establish in Benenden. It's an exciting step forward for the hall and the village."

The market runs at the hall from 9-11 am on the first three Tuesdays of each month.

Nancy Tolhurst

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Bird Notes

Mysteries of the late-arriving migrants

Early one morning in June I walked from Newenden to the railway bridge along the banks of the Rother, whose riparian habitat offers a few different species. At the cricket pitch, House Martins were wheeling overhead, possibly with the first brood now on the wing. I was thinking about the lack of House Martins in Benenden and where they had got to; three days later I learned that they arrived back at the Old Vicarage - some seven weeks late. Where had they been in the meantime? It probably means they will have time for only one brood.

A lone Swallow was on the telegraph wire overlooking the site of the now demolished village hall, the eaves of which had been its home for many years. Had it found a mate? And where will it build his new home? I was glad to see a Swallow as there seems to be a dearth this year, after the unprecedented early arrival of a few in February. Both Swallows and Martins winter in the southern half of Africa and I feel there must be problems on their migration route this year. What they may be is difficult to imagine and I suspect we will never know.

Also on the cricket square were a pair of Pied Wagtails feeding an offspring, and close by I noticed a larger bird acting rather strangely. Before raising my binoculars I thought it was going to be a Sparrowhawk consuming its breakfast, so I was rather surprised to see a Mistle Thrush with its wings spread, wiping the grass with them and at the same time pecking the ground with its beak. I was somewhat mystified at first and then the scene reminded me of pictures of birds 'anting'. Although from my distance some 60 yards away I could not see any ants, I was convinced that is what it was doing. What anting is and the reason for it remains a bit of a mystery. The most favoured theory is that the birds, mainly song birds, irritate the ants in a way that makes them excrete formic acid, which the birds wipe on their feathers as anti-parasite or antifungal protection. In all my years of birdwatching I have seen this behaviour only once before, although there are plenty of accounts of it in birding literature.

All this activity on the cricket square somewhat delayed my stroll along the river, where Reed Warblers were much in evidence, carrying food for their young or perhaps even feeding a young Cuckoo, the possibility of which was increased when a pair of Cuckoos landed in a hawthorn bush adjacent to the river bank and, I think, possibly mated, although it is quite late in the season and some males have already embarked on their return journey so it may have been two females having a territory squabble.

About halfway along the walk there is a marshy bit of the river bank with some tall vegetation which is the exit into the river for the sewage farm. It was a territory for a Sedge Warbler for a number of years but not for the last few, so I was very pleasantly surprised to hear its buzzing flight call. I watched as it ascended and then descended onto the same song post, showing off its orange gape and creamy eye stripe. Where had it been when I surveyed the river twice earlier in the year? Perhaps another late-arriving migrant like the House Martins.

For most of the walk I was accompanied by quite a few Skylarks singing high in the sky. At the railway bridge a male Yellowhammer was perching on the telegraph wires performing its "a little bit of bread and no cheese" song. My return walk was more odonatan related as I watched Blue-tailed Damselflies flit about, along with the rarer White-legged variety.



A Song Thrush anting

In Your Garden

Planting partners

At this time of year we are spoilt for choice if we want to try new plant combinations in our gardens. Leftovers from June, such as valerian and astrantias, are still going due to their long flowering period, and the high summer plants such as gauras, verbenas, grasses, fennels and hydrangeas are all in fine fettle, not to mention anything special and tender like dahlias, cannas, cleomes and some salvias.

We are advised when selecting partners in our borders, to choose like-minded plants that prefer similar soil conditions and aspect and that the real trick is to then combine said plants in a way that really sings. One of my favourites is to partner stipa tenuissima with a hardy salvia, such as 'Caradonna'. Both plants are very easy to grow and the combination of a wafty grass with the upright, vivid purple spires of the salvia always looks a winner.

I also like valerian with roses as the bushy habit of the valerian helps hide all the straggly legs of the rose, but I have just this year discovered how veronicastrums look good growing next to roses, too. Their foliage is upright and interesting to look at and when in flower they partner very well with a shrub rose of a similar height (such as 'Gertrude Jekyll', 'William Shakespeare' or 'Young Lycidas', among my favourites). They also gently fade into autumn so there's a long season of interest there, particularly once the roses have stopped. For a shady combination, an astrantia with an evergreen fern has been a success story for me this year, again a long season of interest as it's still going even as I write.



lychnis and hydrangea arborescens

However, nature broke all the rules this year. I have a large patch of hydrangea arborescens growing (these prefer lots of moisture, nice rich soil and a bit of shade) and some lychnis seedlings (hot and dry conditions) flew in from somewhere and planted themselves right on the edge, making a perfect picture this summer. I would never have positioned these plants together myself, but as the picture shows, nature is, as ever, firmly in control and an excellent educator too - giving us the confidence to try something new in the garden and to enjoy the results! I hope you, too, have some new success stories in the garden this summer.

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Benenden Village Hall

"Let your imagination run wild – the hall can be anything you want!"



Call Lorraine on
01580 243123 for details

www.benendenvillagehall.org



Annabel Lear GARDENS

Planting . Design . Consultancy

annabellelear@btinternet.com
 featured on houzz.co.uk

Outdoor workout classes in Benenden

Want to get fit, build strength, burn fat and have fun?
 Short of time and want great results?
 Then join my circuit-style class

When? Mondays and Fridays 8.45am

Where? The Glebe Field, next to Benenden Village Hall

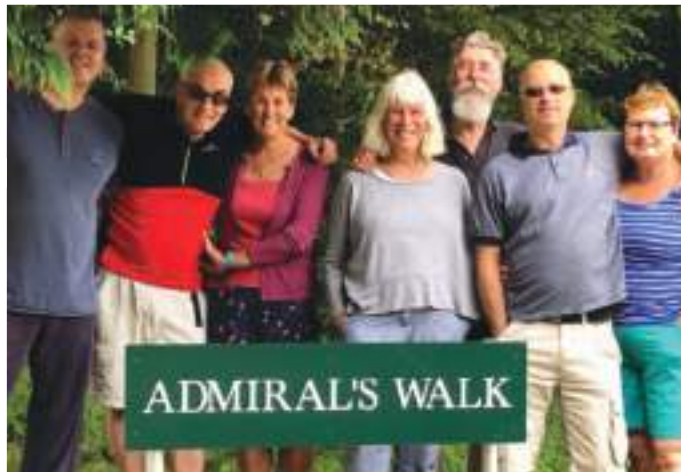
Who? Me? From beginner to ultra-fit, my mixed-ability sessions are designed so that everyone gets a workout at their own level

1:1 personal training also available



For further details contact
 Caroline Kennedy
 ☎ 07971 295442
 ✉ pt@carolinekennedy.co.uk
 f Caroline Kennedy Personal Trainer

Free trial class!



Above: Impressive cricketers breaking a record held since 1750; residents funding new Admiral's Walk signage; local shopping experience at our farmers' market; Jazz and Blues afternoon at the Pavilion. Jazz photographs: Hayley Daley
Front cover: High summer. Photograph: Amelia Thomas