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Magazine
September 2018

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Editorial



Sitting outside the Iden Green Pavilion listening to the Jazz a few weeks ago I was struck by the number of people in shorts and summer frocks. Usually during a British summer we huddle under fleeces and blankets as soon as the sun goes down. But not this year. For a change we've been able to sit outside long after nightfall enjoying the balmy temperatures.

It has struck me before that the key difference between summer activities on the continent and those in Britain is the warmth of the evenings further south. It means that village fetes in France are invariably held later in the day with young and old sitting out or dancing in the square till after midnight often to the accompaniment of loud amplified music. And no one seems disturbed by the noise. It seems accepted that the enjoyment of a couple of hundred people one or two nights a year takes precedence over possible minor inconvenience of an individual. It's a principle actually enshrined in the licensing regulations in Britain, where you can get a Temporary Events License from the local authority legally allowing you to sell alcohol and play music until a specified time - often around midnight.

But that doesn't stop the occasional person from confronting events organisers and angrily threatening or abusing them. Which is a pity. A polite request to lower the volume would seem much more likely to get the desired result. And a little bit of tolerance for other's enjoyment might perhaps make us a warmer and more inclusive community.

Reports of many and varied community activities are to be found throughout this edition of the magazine. We hope you enjoy it, and the remainder of this long hot summer.

Kent Barker, Co-Editor

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

Editors: Kent Barker, Minnie Garnier, Peter Thomas

Editorial Board: PCC Rep: Tracy Claridge, PC Rep: Kent Barker, Treasurer: Charles Trollope

Acting Advertising Manager: Paul Leek, Advertising Assistant: Iain Fraser

Distribution: Marilyn and Dick Hill, Layout Editor: Camilla Macdonald

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Village Calendar

August

Friday 31 Mitchell Wines of Australia tasting and BBQ, Benenden School Café, 7pm p.25

September

Sunday 2 Village Panto Auditions, Benenden Village Hall, 2pm p.9
Sunday 2 Martin Williams, Organ Recital, St George's Church, 6pm p.13
Friday 7 Woodland Wide Games, Iden Green Congregational Church, 7pm
Saturday 8 Friends of Kent Churches, Ride + Stride p.11
Saturday 8 Charity Concert, The Paper Mill, Benenden, 7pm p.11
Saturday 8 Quiz Night, St George's Club, 8.15pm
Saturday 15 Cornhole Tossing, St George's Club, 8.15pm
Sunday 16 Messy Church, St George's Church, 4-6pm p.31
Monday 17 Parish Council Meeting, Memorial Hall, 7pm
Tuesday 18 Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm p.29
Tuesday 18 Iden Green and Benenden WI, Handbell Ringing, Memorial Hall, 2pm p.13
Sunday 23 Family BBQ, St George's Club, 1pm
Tuesday 25 Merry and Bright, Outing to Bewl Water
Saturday 29 Neighbourhood Development Plan Village Meeting, Iden Green Pavilion, 10am p.15
Saturday 29 Darts London Fives, St George's Club, 8.30pm

October

Sunday 7 St George's Harvest Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm p.11
Friday 12 The Music Scholars of Benenden School, St George's Church, 7.30pm p.13

Benenden Youth Club/Streetcruizer, age 11+

Tuesdays at Benenden Village Hall, 6.30-8.30pm

Coffee Shop

Wednesdays in the Memorial Hall, 10-12noon

Benenden Bowls Club

Thursdays on the recreation field, practice night, 6.30pm

Cakes & Chaos: Cafe and Toddler Group

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

Refuse Lorry Collections

Saturday 8 September for Garden/Compostable Waste

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

Saturday 22 September for Domestic Waste

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

Parish Council



This month it is my turn as a parish councillor to introduce myself. My name is Julie Lewis and I have lived in Iden Green for the past 20 years, having moved here from Lincolnshire with my husband and our two young children. My husband had taken a job in London and we wished to continue living in a rural area and one which enabled him to commute. We could not have made a better choice of village than Benenden.

Over those years I have worked at Benenden Hospital as a registered nurse in general surgery, pre-assessment, outpatients and, for the past few years, ophthalmology. I have seen many changes during that time and I'm pleased that after the long process of restructuring and building work over the last four years or so, the newly developed hospital is now a well equipped state-of-the-art facility right on our doorstep.

I have tried to be a reasonably active member of the community over the years, supporting and getting involved in the various events that happen in both Benenden and Iden Green. More so in Iden Green, where I have helped with the social events run by the team at the pavilion. Many of you might have enjoyed the annual quiz or the summer-time open-air Jazz and Blues at the end of July, both fun events and a great way to mix with your neighbours.

The late Peter Davies introduced me to the work of the BPC. As a close neighbour and family friend, I think he recognised my interest in politics and current affairs, so two years ago I was asked if I would consider being co-opted to the BPC. I don't regret my decision to do so and I am thoroughly enjoying the experience. I have met more local people from around the parish over the past two years than over the last two decades.

There is a good programme of training courses provided by the Kent Association of Local Councils to help equip those of us who are new to the work of a parish councillor. Since joining the council I have attended a New Councillor Course and an Introduction to Planning. I have found this induction and training to be essential in becoming effective in this role. I want to contribute and help to improve and sustain our environment and way of life in Benenden; being a councillor is an excellent way to help me achieve this.

Julie Lewis, Parish Councillor

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

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

Parish Council Meeting

Monday 17 September 2018,
Memorial Hall, 7pm

Church Calendar

St George's Church

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

Churchwarden: Tracy Claridge 240454 maisonsicheluk@tlclaridge.co.uk

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

www.benendenchurch.org 850849 benendenchurch@gmail.com

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

Sunday 2 September	8am Communion	10am All-age Communion and Sunday School	5pm Choral Evensong 6pm Organ Recital
Sunday 9 September	8am 1662 Communion	10am Morning Worship	5pm Evening Prayer at Mission Church
Sunday 16 September	8am Communion	10am Sung Eucharist	4pm Messy Church
Sunday 23 September	8am Communion	10am Morning Worship	3pm Deanery Confirmation at St Mary's Church, Frittenden
Sunday 30 September	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

Baptisms 18 August Max Carfrae

19 August Emilia Kaczmarek

26 August Leo Orford

Weddings 4 August Caroline Sherrington and Chuk Iroegbu

18 August Clare Hall and Matthew Castle

Funerals 3 August Cynthia Gee Funeral St George's and Cremation Tunbridge Wells

10 August Pearl Gash Interment

22 August Raymond Freeman Interment

Rector's Letter



Embracing the routine

Well, that's the long summer holiday period over for another year! It has been a hot summer though; one to be added to the annals of folklore: "Do you remember the summer 1949/1976/2003?" Now we can add 2018 to that list. I hope that those who have been away - those who have been fortunate enough to go off on holiday - have returned home and are feeling recharged, refreshed, and ready for a return to the normal routine of life.

Routine is an interesting thing; some people really enjoy it, and will embrace getting back to 'a normal routine', others much prefer life when there is not the everyday, boring pattern of things to have to do. I guess it depends on whether you see the 'conventional, everyday, normal and ordinary' as a positive thing, or view routine as 'regular, unremarkable and plain'. Personally, I like the routine and pattern of the seasonal year, the academic year, and the church year.

At the beginning of September we now face the start of another academic year - with all the excitement, and sometimes the worry, that that can bring. Perhaps it's school for the first time for your first child; or the last year at Primary School; or your youngest going off to University; or your last academic year before retirement - all these milestones bring their own anticipation and emotions. The wedding season is nearly over for another year - just the excitement of another two weddings to go in our parish churches. The Molly Dancers will be camping with us again - and dancing outside church at the top of the Green after the morning service on the 9 September. And other routine but exciting things start up in church once again: Sunday School on the 2 September, Cakes & Chaos (the toddler group with drop-in café) on Friday 7 September, and Messy Church on Sunday 16 September. And then, before we know it, we will be approaching harvest time, with our Harvest service and lunch on the 7 October. Then on to remembering the Faithful Departed in a service on the 2 November, and Remembrance Sunday on 11 November - carrying even more significance this year as we commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI. And so our year rolls on, all part of the routine of our village life.

I find there is something comforting in that annual pattern - the annual routine - to our lives. It is a part of who we are as a community. If these regular, ordinary, routine things were taken out of the calendar, and out of our lives, then I believe we would miss them; we would lament their passing. So I encourage you, now we are back from our holidays, to embrace the routine of village life; embrace the pattern of life; and enjoy it with one another.

Revd David Commander, Rector



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Just a Thought



No pressure!

August is for results and September is for consequences - at least in this part of the globe. But the role of tests and exams looms large the world over, whatever the time of year, and in some places the options and alternatives rest heavy on the test-taker.

It was very hot. Kiyotaka had had a very busy morning in school and now he just wanted to play. But his mother was calling and he realised that it was Monday and he had to go for a special program to develop his powers of thinking. He sighed and wished that it was Tuesday or Wednesday because on Tuesdays he took karate to learn traditional discipline. On Wednesdays he had classes in art and gymnastics to enhance creativity and agility. He was coming to the end of this regime, and then he would sit his entrance exam for the first grade in one of Japan's most competitive elementary schools. Often he woke up at night worrying as he knew that his older brother had failed and his father had been very unhappy. Kiyotaka was five years old and he knew what was expected of him.

It was hot on this country track too as the Year 7 schoolboy, Joshua, was walking the five miles home. The all-important Zambian Primary School Leaving exams were over. Now he was carrying a few battered school notebooks, but the shared textbooks had been handed in. It was his last day at this school and there had been an assembly. He was praised for leading his football team to victory in the local league but most importantly he had had an excellent report from his teacher and headmaster. This was despite having missed a few weeks at the beginning of the year when his parents didn't have enough for school fees. At the end of the month his father would return to the school with him to collect his results and so find out whether this was the end of any schooling, or if the dreams of being a doctor would be a little closer.

Wang had the envelope in her hand. The odds were heavily against her but she had studied for nearly four months for the test, reviewing old questions, taking mock exams and attending preparatory classes on the weekend. She thought back to that Sunday when she joined nearly one million others taking the Chinese Civil Service exam, and the fact that in order to complete the aptitude test in the time limit she had had to train to answer each multi-choice question within 50 seconds. "And I really struggled with the essay about modern governance based on the ancient Chinese understanding and metaphor of water," she fretted. She knew that civil service jobs in China are considered the 'golden rice bowl' because of the stable pay and generous benefits. If she'd scored high enough, the actual job interviews would take place some months later.

Time to open the envelope.

Sue Fisher

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News and Events

New Primary School funding fix

There's been another big step towards Benenden's new primary school. A major part of the unexciting-sounding but vital financial arrangements has been agreed between Kent County Council and the government's organisation the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The agency has agreed to free up enough money to pay for the school except for £1 million which will come through KCC.

The important agreement is that the government has accepted that the local contribution will be capped at £1 million. That is even if costs are higher than would be the case for many school projects because of the exceptional nature of the new building, being set in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

It was a slow process but we have got over this very big hurdle and it means a huge amount to the campaigners who've worked and worked for this school. There has been a lot going on behind the scenes to make this work and thanks are due to the KCC Education Cabinet Member, Roger Gough, and his team.

Discussions have also been taking place to get agreement between KCC and the Diocese of Canterbury, who are committed to working together to secure the new school, about the release of the old school buildings to help the funding. These discussions too have their complexities, but appear close to agreement.

As these final issues are resolved we will have, more or less, a freeway to the new school.

Seán Holden, Kent County Councillor



YOUR FACE IN LIGHTS?

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Auditions are open to all on
Sunday 2 September 2018
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enquiry@benendenplayers.co.uk

Appealing for volunteers

Benenden Hospital is appealing for volunteers to help meet and greet patients and visitors to its £54m redeveloped site. The hospital currently has a small group of volunteers who provide guiding services, reception and patient queries, but it wants to recruit more people who are willing to give their time to help with a range of roles including administration, catering, portering, grounds maintenance and gardening.

Benenden Hospital support services manager Emma Clements said: "We are enormously grateful and indebted to our volunteers for the invaluable support they provide our patients and visitors. For many people, volunteering offers them the chance to give something back to the community, meet new people, boost their confidence and gain work experience, so if you're a friendly person who is willing to give the gift of time, however much that may be, we would love to hear from you."

Benenden Hospital is a state-of-the-art independent hospital and not-for-profit organisation with charitable status. All volunteer opportunities are subject to the required disclosure and reference checks.

If you would like to become a volunteer at Benenden Hospital, please contact:

Emma Clements 857406

volunteering@benenden.org.uk



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Students and School-Leavers

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

Trustees will also give consideration to applications for grants for GAP year projects of educational worth.

Latest date for applications 30 September.

Application forms available from Benenden's Community Shop and the Clerk to the Charity:

David Harmsworth, Clerk 240683
gibbonandbuckland@gmail.com

Friends of Kent Churches annual bike ride: Ride + Stride

Saturday 8 September

A cycle ride, walk or even a drive for the less hardy around Kent churches; a chance to see inside them all, fight the flab and help raise money for your local church by obtaining some sponsorship. It's a win, win, win and it's happening on Saturday 8 September.

Every little helps - your sponsorship money is split equally between a church or chapel of your choice and the charity itself, Friends of Kent Churches, helping to save churches in Kent. As walkers, cyclists or sponsors, you can help to make this a successful community event. Last year alone we raised over £135,000, but we can beat that.

Interested? Please contact:

Alison Prall, Parish Event organiser 240417
www.friendsofkentchurches.co.uk

St George's Church Harvest Lunch

Sunday 7 October, Benenden Village Hall,
12.30-3pm

The Harvest Lunch will follow the Harvest Festival Service which will start at 11am. The menu includes smoked salmon terrine, chicken & gammon salad with new potatoes (vegetarian option available), lemon tart with fresh berries & cream. Tea, coffee & mints. Soft drinks are included. Wine & beer will be available to buy.

Always a popular occasion, so buy your tickets early (adults £7, under 12s £3.50) from:

Benenden's Community Shop, in Church or from
Lesley Attwood 243318 lesley.attwood@sky.com

Everyone Welcome



We are having a stall selling lovely candle decorations for Christmas.

Choose one for your own table or give one to your family.

Lots of other things to buy.
Plants and fresh flowers.

Hospice in the Weald event

Saturday 8 September, The Paper Mill,
Benenden, 7pm

A piano and wind recital by the Wealden Ensemble - both of whom are professional musicians - and a champagne reception, including delicious canapés, in the interval. The cost of the tickets is £30 each, in aid of the Hospice and the Brain Tumour Charity. This is an enjoyable and always extremely popular evening, so early booking is advisable.

For information and tickets please contact:

Sarah Andrew 240492
sarahandrew6@googlemail.com



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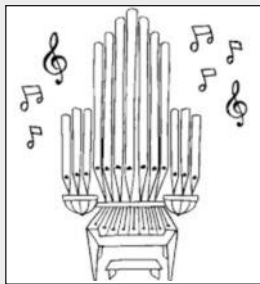
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Martin Williams

ORGAN RECITAL

*Sunday 2 September 2018
St George's Church, Benenden
6pm*

following Choral Evensong at 5pm

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

THE MUSIC SCHOLARS OF BENENDEN SCHOOL

Friday 12 October 2018
at 7.30pm in St George's Church

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

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

Classical for charity

The latest event in the tenth annual Richard
Beattie Davis Sandhurst Musical series for
Hospice in the Weald:

Wednesday 12 September, 3pm Alexander
Karpeyev will be the first Russian to guest at the
series. He will be playing Medtner, Tchaikovsky,
Rachmaninov and other repertoire from his
homeland. Tickets by donation (minimum £15).

The event takes place in a private home in
Sandhurst with a fine Steinway grand piano.

Reservations in advance only from:
Gillian Davis 850384

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



Iden Green and Benenden WI

Meeting in Iden Green Pavillion we heard about
Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton, a love story
with intrigue - an interesting history.

Three members greatly enjoyed Staplehurst's
WI Summer Garden Party. This month some
members met for lunch at the Red Lion in Brede.

Dates to remember:

Tuesday 18 September, Handbell Ringing,
Memorial Hall, 2-4pm (an open meeting for
friends and family)

Tuesday 20 October, Photographs of the BBC,
Memorial Hall, 2-4 pm

Shirley Fidler, President 752232

Benenden Cricket Club

Our home fixtures for September on The
Green are:

Saturday 1 September v Matfield Green at 1pm

Saturday 15 September Benenden Bulls v
Benenden Pre-School and Primary School
at 1pm

Saturday 22 September v Kilndown and
Lamberhurst at 1pm

Saturday 29 September v West Farleigh at 1pm
Richard Brunt, Club Captain

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Neighbourhood Development Plan

Housing target falls into line

Much of the focus of our chairman Paul Tolhurst's reports in this magazine on preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Benenden has been on housing numbers. The 'Objectively Assessed Need' for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) is to deliver 14,000 new dwellings in the borough by 2033.

Landowners in Benenden responded so enthusiastically to TWBC's 'call for sites' that, despite Benenden being almost entirely in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it appeared we were being targeted to take a disproportionate number of new dwellings (perhaps over 200) between now and 2033.

In the last few weeks, a number of meetings have been held with TWBC, mainly because our Neighbourhood Development Plan needs to interface with the Local Plan TWBC are preparing for the borough. We reiterated the vision, determined in public meetings, that 'the Parish of Benenden in 2035 will be a thriving, peaceful and rural place to live, work and rest. Its village feel and historic beauty will have been preserved through sympathetic and managed growth'.

We identified that Benenden is one of the remotest parts of the borough; the same distance from Maidstone, Ashford and Hastings as from Tunbridge Wells; journeys from Benenden to the station at Staplehurst and to the A21 are via Sissinghurst and Goudhurst or Hawkhurst, where there are already significant traffic bottlenecks; the evident danger at the crossroads in Iden Green, Benenden and at Castleton's Oak will only be compounded by more houses and more traffic.

We acknowledged that we needed to take our share of the housing need (but not a disproportionate share) and suggested a housing target for Benenden of about 100 dwellings in the 15 years to 2033 - a proposal



Benenden needs You!

Benenden Neighbourhood Plan
Village Meeting

Iden Green Pavilion
Saturday 29 September
10-12noon

Please come to a public consultation on the progress of the Plan so far and tell us your thoughts before we progress to the next stage of drafting the Plan.

Get involved and help shape our future

that was in line with the Benenden Parish Plan. Encouragingly, I can report that our proposal has been broadly accepted by TWBC.

Our NDP groups have done a great deal of fact finding. The reality is that there is employment in Benenden and there may be some limited growth in employment in the next decade, but many of those working for employers in Benenden cannot afford to buy houses in the village. Benenden's housing need is to begin to address this mismatch, because a vibrant and balanced community needs affordable family housing for our local employees as well as suitable homes for commuters, those working from home and those who have retired.

The housing in Benenden is dispersed and even in the centre of Benenden the housing density is only about ten dwellings per hectare; we have therefore argued strongly that TWBC's density guideline of 30 dwellings per hectare is not appropriate. Having reached broad agreement with TWBC, we are now working hard writing policies to ensure that development is appropriately sympathetic, sustainable and restrained.

We will be holding a public consultation on Saturday 29 September to keep you advised of progress - please plan to come along.
Tom Dawlings, Vice-Chair, Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group

[illegible]

estimated age of the property. From this survey, we produced a statistical analysis for each design element for each settlement (Character Area). We are intending to use this analysis to create design codes within the NDP for developers.

During our walk around the locality, we were all quite surprised to find that, while we all had a distinct impression from driving through these three Character Areas that Benenden village was all old, tiled-front housing with peg tile roofs, Iden Green was all white weatherboarded houses with peg tile roofs and East End was mainly the hospital complex with a few brick-built semi-detached houses, the actual assortment of dwellings was very varied in each.

There is a complete mix of types and looks of buildings in all three areas and it is this blend that we want to try to emulate in any development. Not only that, but there are various policies within the Local Plan, previously produced by TWBC, and the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that govern the way buildings are developed within the landscape, and we have produced design policies for the Neighbourhood Development Plan which also take these into account.

While there are a lot of people who feel our voices will not be heard by the authorities, I do believe there is merit in what we are trying to achieve and the authorities are duty bound to take our Neighbourhood Development Plan into consideration when assessing the look and design of housing in our parish. We will therefore continue to work tirelessly to provide future developers with a blueprint of how we as a community want to see the parish develop and what we believe will ensure that future generations will benefit from still being able to enjoy the beautiful area we live in for years to come.

Graham Beveridge,

Housing Design Group NDP

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Benenden's tribute to the fallen

The annual Remembrance Sunday service will take place at St George's on Sunday 11 November. This will mean that, 100 years after the armistice to end World War I, Britain will be paying tribute at 11am to those who fell in that ghastly conflict.

After the service, in addition to wreath laying by representatives of the Parish Council, the Royal British Legion, the Benenden School Combined Cadet Force and the Benenden Scouts, we would particularly like to involve members of the 24 families who lost, in total, 32 relations from the parish in the Great War.

If you are related to one (or more) of these families, we would like you to agree to ask Jane Dalton Holmes for a wooden cross on which will be inscribed the name of your relation. If you would be willing to take part in the parade to the War Memorial it would be good to see all those families gathered to set their family crosses into the turf after the organisations' wreaths have been laid.



This year we shall also be displaying a black silhouette figure of the Silent Soldier during Remembrance tide.

Please support us and we encourage you most warmly to take part in this special centenary commemoration.

Robin and Jane Dalton Holmes,
Royal British Legion
240923 robin.dh@me.com

World War I centenary celebrations

Friday 9 November

Richard Attenborough's 1969 satire musical Oh! What a Lovely War will be shown on Friday 9 November in the evening, so please save the date for this free-to-view village event.

Saturday 10 November

As part of the celebrations to mark the centenary of the end of World War I, Benenden Players are hosting a variety show in the village hall on the evening of Saturday 10 November. We are looking for acts which reflect the pre-war music hall variety scene (1900-1920 or thereabouts). Can you sing, dance or perform a sketch? We will help you with costumes, music and staging. If you are interested please talk to, or email:

Nancy Tolhurst 07711 139218
nancy.tolhurst@btinternet.com
Ruth Clark ruth@splashpr.co.uk
Peter Ellis 240540 peteralanellis@aol.com

Sunday 11 November

On the evening of Sunday 11 November there will be a commemorative event in St George's Church including poetry and the reading of war diary entries. As part of the commemorations we will be joining in the national tributes with the playing of the last post at 6.55pm, the lighting of the beacon (on the ridge) at 7pm and the ringing of the church bells at 7.05pm. This is a once-in-a-lifetime event, so please put it on your calendar.

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Play Benenden: your new community play area

Play Benenden is the campaign to plan, design and raise funds for an improved play area in the village. Initially launched in 2015, the project consulted with children, parents, grandparents, carers and others who live and work in the community to understand the type of play equipment they wanted and the look and feel of the play area. Using this information we created a design brief, and went through a selection process to choose a company to design and deliver a new play area.

In 2016, uncertainties about the new primary school building meant that we had to pause the work on Play Benenden, but

in Sutton Valence called Playspaces (previously Outdoorsy Living). We are now ready to go and you may already have seen posts on our Facebook page (PlayBenenden) about the progress we are making.

The new play area will be located along the back of the recreation ground after the Glebe Field access, providing us with a larger space than previously. It will have a rural theme with a wooden/natural look as far as possible to best suit our rural village location. There will be a defined area for pre-school and younger children, further space for older children, and a picnic area for parents, carers and other members of the community to use. In the

pre-school area, the equipment will include baby swings, a wooden tractor for imaginative play, a fun climbing frame with slide, and story-telling area with mini stools for the children to sit on.

In the area for older children, equipment will include swings, a nest swing, a large climbing frame, a trim trail and a rope swing popular for group swinging.

We are very happy with the design and we hope you, the Benenden community, share our excitement about the potential this could have for our children.

The play area is designed to provide a creative and imaginative space

for the children in our parish to play, be active and spend more time outside in a safe environment. It will be enclosed by fencing to protect the children and give parents and carers peace of mind, and we have included →



at the beginning of 2018 we gathered up our enthusiasm and energy and prepared to relaunch the campaign. We have revisited the original design and received revised costings from the play area designer, a company based

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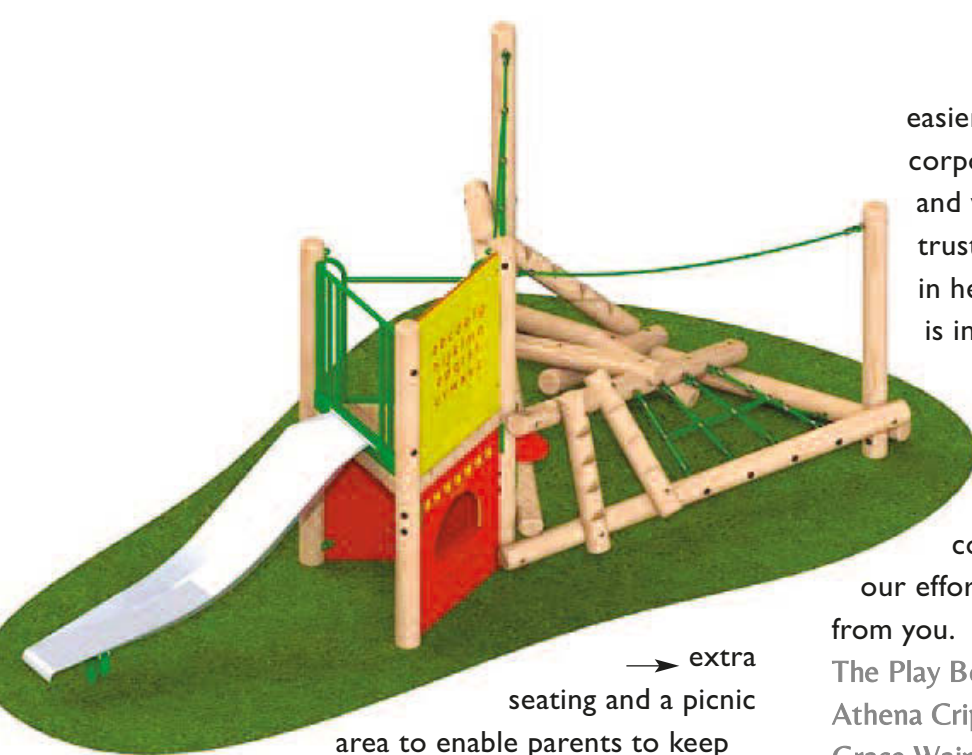
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The campaign to raise funds to deliver this exciting play area has already started. We have received substantial donations from both the Benenden Village Trust and the Benenden Parish Council, taking us to approximately half of our anticipated £100,000 target. This is a great start, but we will really need your help and donations to make this campaign a success. Together, we know that we can reach our target and deliver this amazing resource for our community. We will be developing an online donation page to make fundraising

easier, contacting local businesses about corporate sponsorship and donations, and we will be making applications to trusts and foundations for assistance in helping achieve our goal. If anyone is interested in making a donation, or helping us in any way, then please get in touch.

This is a community resource and we know that you as a community are fully behind us in our efforts. We look forward to hearing from you.

The Play Benenden Committee (Beth Astridge, Athena Cripps, Tom Gray, Katy Marshall, Grace Wain and Lucy Watkins)

07804 127262

playbenenden@gmail.com



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(Benenden Ordinary Dads Society)

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Talking Shop

Welcome to new committee members

As mentioned in last month's magazine, we are delighted to welcome two new members to our shop committee: Sally-Ann Marks and Peter Ellis.

Sally-Ann moved to the village from Surrey in February 2016 after retiring from being chair of Surrey County Council. She and her husband Ron are the owners and directors of the Baldwins Travel Group, their two oldest sons are joint managing directors and they are extremely proud of their large team, especially as they have just won an award as Travel Agency of the Year for the whole of the United Kingdom.

Sally-Ann and her family love their new home and the fact that Benenden has such a lovely community-owned shop was one of the great attractions of moving to this beautiful village. As an occasional volunteer behind the counter she has learned how important the shop and café are to so many residents and she was keen to join the committee so she can help to contribute to its continued success.

Many of you will know Peter Ellis because for many years he has been involved in a number of ways in the village: the Benenden Players, hall committee, parish council, BACS and the Harmsworth Trust to name but a few. He was also very much the guiding force in the installation of life-saving defibrillators in Benenden and Iden Green. He has spent the last 30 years in the health sector, 20 of them in various managerial positions, and he has gained much useful experience in people management.

Peter has lived in the village for the last 11 years and becoming involved in the shop committee is, for him, an opportunity to do something tangible for the community which fits around his many work commitments.

As the shop continues to thrive, we always welcome new helpers to our group; especially new volunteers who want to give some help and have some fun. Please do come forward and join us.

Bev Beveridge

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Village Hall highlights

September is always a fun time at the hall. With summer holidays a fading memory, we welcome back all our lovely regulars, which means once again our timetable is crammed with various clubs and classes. And, of course, it means the return of the Benenden Players, who will be starting rehearsals for next year's pantomime. I wonder what delights they have in store.

There is limited availability left for weekend bookings during September, and only a few dates still available for the remainder of 2018. The hall diary for 2019 is already starting to fill up. If you're planning a party or celebration, give me a call to check availability or check out our online calendar at www.benendenvillagehall.org/events/.

There are a couple of regular slots available midweek, so if you are looking for a great venue to hold a club or class, get in touch and find out more about what we have to offer. The hall now has a new member of staff, Steve Hockney, who is also part of the Benenden Village Trust family. Steve will be our site manager, keeping on top of our maintenance work, if you see him round and about at the hall, do stop and say hello.

To find out more about the hall and upcoming events, or to check availability, go to: www.benendenvillagehall.org

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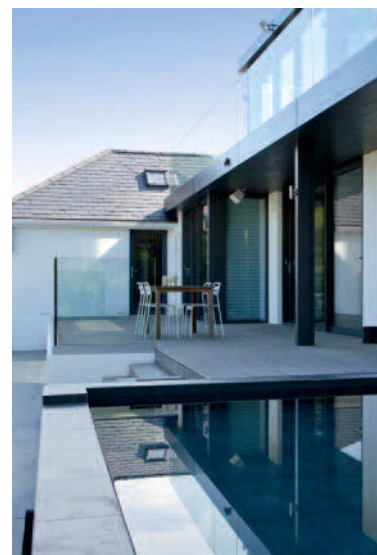
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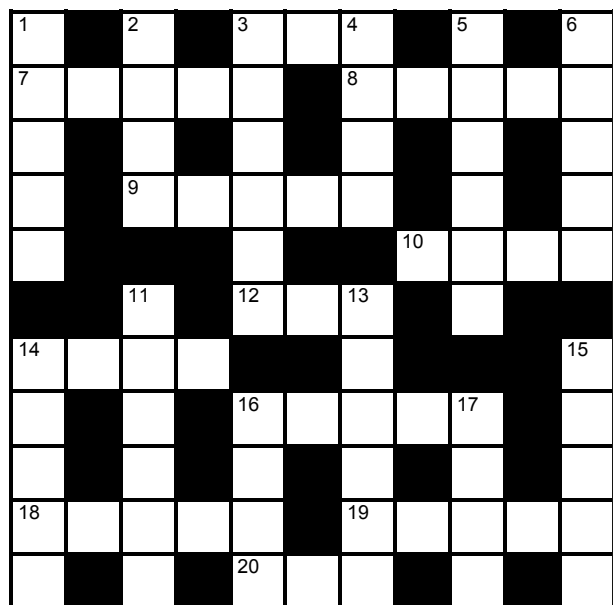
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CROSSWORD No8 (Easy)



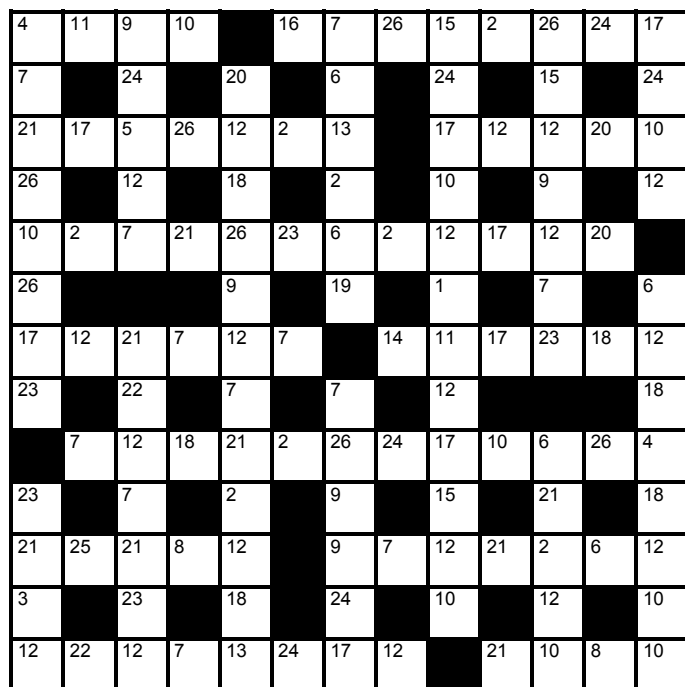
Across

- 3 Miserable when Summer's over (3)
- 7 Fundamental cleaner (5)
- 8 Seven, weirdly, isn't (5)
- 9 Awkward loner sign up (5)
- 10 Comfy home is a North-Eastern street (4)
- 12 I'll smooth things over using cod rustic accent! (3)
- 14 Celtic symbol's a right one, in France (4)
- 16 Check car park tarmac has gone down (5)
- 18 Pick up a little portion of an angle, anticlockwise (5)
- 19 Take off the boil (5)
- 20 Imminent owing (3)

Down

- 1 Bee, so confused, takes way too much nectar! (5)
- 2 Not working but ticking over nicely (4)
- 3 Two Speakers would allow each side to be heard (6)
- 4 PC in a clearing? (4)
- 5 Mix-up ended a baffled sound (6)
- 6 Sounds like cord is let through small ring on sail, perhaps? (5)
- 11 Not familiar with pristine condition (6)
- 13 Likely held responsible (6)
- 14 Limit terrible anger (5)
- 15 See through Cliff? (5)
- 16 Wettest region in the Slough of Despond? (4)
- 17 Prevent owning up? (4)

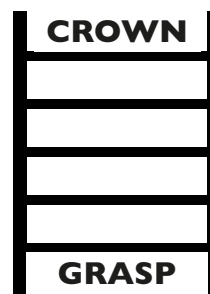
CODEWORD No8 (Moderate)



1	2	3	4	5	6	H	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	C	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

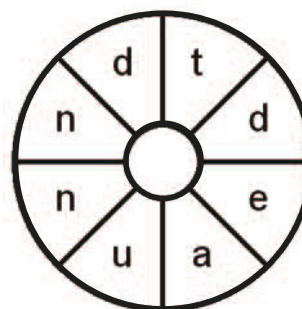
Each number represents a letter. Break the code and complete the grid. Three letters have been given to help you.

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

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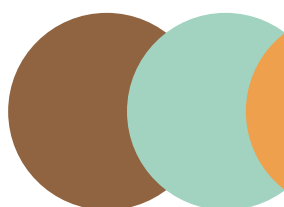
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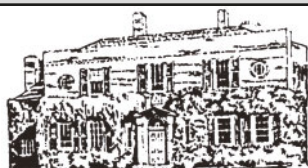
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No, for an outlay of a mere £495,000 (plus £99,000 VAT!) you could be, as the estate agent's blurb says, the proud owner of this "charming 17th century Freehouse" with "exposed beams and timbers and inglenook fireplace ... pretty beer garden and large car park", complete with three-bedroom living accommodation above.

But before you reach for your cheque-book, remember that old adage: running a pub is like having a rowdy party in your front room - seven nights a week, 52 weeks a year. And that's if you're lucky. Nigel and Hilly who had the William IV used to say "it's a very long winter in Benenden!" Meaning that there would be midweek nights when there wouldn't be any trade at all. And that was in the centre of the village, not in an obscure lane off Iden Green. So you could be paying for a chef, bar and waiting staff, plus electricity and heat all evening for no customers - or just one person and their dog.

But what about those long balmy summer's days when the garden is packed with people sipping Pimm's and quaffing lagers and cool pink wine? That would make it all worthwhile wouldn't it? I recall the scene a few years back in this same Woodcock garden on an early summer's afternoon. The landlord had prepared a hog-roast clearly expecting large numbers. As the rain bucketed down with drops penetrating



the awning and dripping onto the few punters, I said to my son: "Remember this, this is the archetypal English bank holiday!"

Anyway I wish whoever buys the Woodcock well. I've been drinking there on and off for about 50 years (they weren't so concerned about checking your age back in the 60s) so I hope it prospers. It's just a pity - particularly for the last landlord's sake - that Greene King took so long to decide to sell off the freehold.
Kent Barker

Village Lunch

Tuesday 18 September, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm

All are welcome. It's just £5 a head. If you need a lift please let us know and we can arrange it. Please call Sheila on 01580 240838, preferably by Friday 14 September, if you haven't already put your name down but would like to come.

MEET YOUR MP Helen Grant

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



1:1

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Bonfire 6.30pm Fireworks 7pm

News from Benenden School

At the time of writing we are awaiting this year's exam results. This is of course a nerve-racking time for the girls but we have stressed to them the importance of keeping grades in perspective. Inevitably, exams are important as they are a gateway to young people's chosen higher education and career path, but none of us should lose sight of the fact that grades do not define us - it is who you are, what you stand for, your work ethic and ability to connect with people that will really count.

Focus is now turning to the start of the new academic year in early September and this gives us an opportunity to look back on a productive summer at Benenden. Hundreds of international children, mainly from Europe, enjoyed residencies with us through the Oxford International programme, in addition to our traditional summer school visitors from Austrian school Obermair and the Kent Music School. It is lovely to see the bustling activity of our usual

term times continuing in the summer and for so many children to be making use of the facilities.

We are always proud to host the Benenden Tennis Tournament and were delighted that it was such a success once again.

Meanwhile, Benenden girls have been making the most of their summer holidays too. A group of pupils spent two weeks touring Barbados and the United States, playing lacrosse and netball. We have also been hosting pre-season lacrosse and netball camps in London, which are aimed at teaching Benenden girls skills in these sports.

Our thriving outdoor education teams have also been busy. The Combined Cadet Force were in North Yorkshire for their annual summer camp and a group of girls were in the Lake District for their four-day Gold Duke of Edinburgh assessed expedition. For those of us who have been struggling in the heatwave, spare a thought for our hardy girls who were trekking and pitching tents in this weather!

Samantha Price, Headmistress

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STEP CHANGE

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

CODEWORD No8

16 Pond, 17 Deny

Down: 1 Obese, 2 Idle, 3 Stereo, 4 Dell, 5 Deaden, 6 Islet, 11 Unused, 13 Liabe, 14 Range, 15 Sheep,

14 Rune, 16 Plaid, 18 Glean, 19 Lance, 20 Due

Across: 3 Sad, 7 Bidet, 8 Evens, 9 Enrol, 10 Nest, 12 Oil,

CROSSWORD No8

MINDBENDERS

Answers

Reclaiming our fruit from the French

I've never grasped why the French are given the credit for anything cooked with apples. Stick any animal in a pot with a pint of cider, a chopped-up Bramley and a bit of cream and suddenly it becomes 'Normandy style', no matter that it was made in Kent from fruit grown in our very own Garden County, booze fermented likewise and cream ... well, we have cows in Kent, too.

I'll happily concede that the Normans make very good cider, but as my colleague Alfred Nicol points out on this page, you only have to go as far as Biddenden to get Kentish versions that are every bit as good.

While we're on apple-related cuisine, it may have escaped your notice that 1 September has come round again and with it the start of the pheasant season. What better combination than our most colourful and stupid game bird cooked with apple to welcome autumn to our tables? Faisan a la Normande? Mais non! This is Benenden pheasant, hit with a Land Rover in Iden Green and taken home for the pot.

Freelander pheasant (serves four)

- Take two pheasants and brown in a few tbsps of olive oil in a big, heavy pan
- Brown four rashers of smoked streaky bacon and then a dozen shallots and a stick of celery (all chopped) in the big, heavy pan
- Put the birds (seasoned with salt and pepper), bacon, shallots and celery in your big French Le Creuset casserole, add a couple of bay leaves, a few sprigs of fresh thyme and a tbsp of juniper berries, then pour over a soupcon of flaming Calvados as a nod to our Norman cousins
- Add three medium-sized apples (cored and chunky-cut)
- Add 750ml of Biddenden Strong Kentish cider (medium) and 250ml of chicken stock
- Bring to a simmer, cover and cook at 180 degrees for an hour (or until tender)
- Serve with fried apple segments, mash, green veg and more cider.

Peter Thomas



Julian Barnes amongst his vines

Amazing apples and great grapes

Many will be aware of the renaissance in English wine. Many may not know that Biddenden, a family-run vineyard for three generations, was a forerunner of that renaissance and boasts some of England's oldest vines, producing some very fine wines indeed. I was delighted to interview winemaker Julian and hear about his passion for the land that is both his home and livelihood.

Julian Barnes' mother was the visionary behind the vines, initially as a means of diversifying the apple orchards they purchased in the 1950s. Inspired by an article on Women's Hour, she set about planting a vineyard that has exceeded all expectations. Julian is the second generation of Biddenden winemakers and two of his boys remain at the vineyard, continuing the family affair that is an authentic combination of identity and modernity.

Their wine style is as much about Julian's gentle conviction as it is about the unique terroir that makes Biddenden so characterful. His family have been making wines for nearly half a century and he is keen for people to look "behind the label".

Biddenden grows 11 different varieties, some well-known, such as Pinot Noir and Gamay, and some less well-known such as the fragrant Schonberger, the vibrant Bacchus, and the fresh Ortega. Unlike many English vineyards riding on the crest of the sparkling wine wave, most of Biddenden's wine is still, and has a definitive

house style which has won a loyal following among those in the know.

Julian is unequivocal that English red need not play second fiddle to the whites. "People think of reds like Bordeaux or Rioja, but in Germany and Austria for example, reds can be light and fruity, something we can do very well."

Biddenden's sparkling is the product of a long and refined process. As we stood by a new planting of Pinot Noir, Julian explained that while these vines will produce wine in five to six years, it may take 20 for their best sparkling to reach the shelves. Their fizz spends several years maturing on the lees in bottle, minutely turned to gently nudge the yeast deposits from the secondary fermentation into the neck before disgorgement. This is the Champagne Method with a twist; by blending Pinot Noir with the more fruit-forward Reichensteiner and Scheurebe, "we never chase Champagne, but look to make something fruitier."

Careful pruning and wilfully reducing the crop to retain quality and a sense of place typifies Julian's prioritising of quality over quantity. Wine-making with this level of care and attention is without question a labour of love and patience.

Biddenden also specialise in ciders and premium apple juices, ideal for enjoying with food as an alternative to wine. For more information see the recently established Wine Garden of England, a co-operation between seven vineyards promoting their cellar door experience: www.winegardenofengland.co.uk.

It was a delight to meet Julian and taste the wines, which are defined by their balance, fresh fruit and genuine sense of place. Here are four of the best:

Bacchus 2016 A refreshing blend of gooseberry, grass, lemon and minerality to rival any New Zealand Sauvignon. £13.50

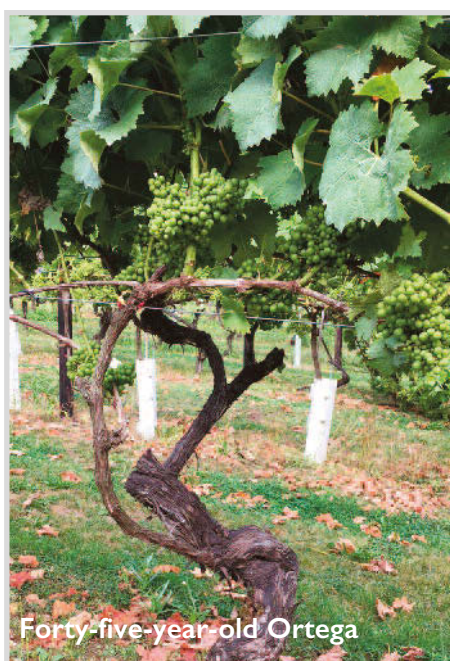
Pinot Reserve 2014 Their silver medallist is a serious bottle of fizz with weight, some brioche notes and plenty of fresh fruit. £28.80

Pinot Noir 2016 Pale pink in colour, this cherry and raspberry compote gives the unmistakable Pinot a new expression. Absolutely wonderful stuff. £15.50

Schonburger 2016 The cool fermentation is prematurely halted to preserve freshness and natural sugars, revealing a

delightful summer-sweet potpourri of lychee and roses. Delicious! £11.80

Alfred Nicol



Bird Notes

Quest leads to the clifftop

Continuing my quest to visit areas of the British Isles to which I have never been took me to the Brecon Beacons, where my first reconnoitre was to Craig y Cillau nature reserve, just south of Crickhowell, which is famous for having the longest caves in the British Isles. The walk was along an escarpment punctuated with hawthorn bushes, from where a song sprang forth which stopped me in my tracks.

It was a Tree Pipit taking off from a perch on a bush, soaring up and then descending to where it started. I watched this bird for some time as I rarely hear them. Until about five years ago we had four to five pairs in Hemsted Forest but they have now disappeared for reasons not known. Possible explanations are loss of habitat, problems on their migration routes or on their



wintering grounds in Africa. Hemsted Forest has not changed very much so loss of habitat seems unlikely. Tree Pipits are ground-nesting birds so disturbance by the huge numbers of dogs that are exercised could be a possibility.

Having got very excited about hearing a Tree Pipit, I was pleased to hear many more that day and it was good to know they are doing well in the Brecons. I then heard a song

coming from a scrubby cliff top and was slightly surprised to see a male Redstart, which I usually associate with woodland habitat but he sang very happily from the cliff top, showing off his red breast and black throat.



Where the climb got very steep I kept my eye out for birds of prey and was quickly rewarded with a pair of Peregrine Falcons patrolling the cliffs. They are notorious for being one of the fastest animals on earth when they stoop down on their unsuspecting prey. There were not a huge number of species in this habitat but there were plenty of Willow Warblers singing their delicate, cascading song, together with a few Cuckoos calling, all making this first walk an extremely pleasant one.

No visit to the Brecons can be complete without climbing Pen Y Fan (2950ft). It was a glorious hot day and the car park was pretty full so I was not expecting to see much bird life, with a long trail of people climbing the peak. However I was very pleasantly surprised to hear a Skylark singing its heart out on the lower slopes, and even more surprised to hear them all the way up the mountain, one territory after another. It really was a lovely background to the uphill grind, especially as it was uncomfortably hot. Unfortunately one or two climbers had mobile telephones blaring out some thumping beating noise, which interrupted the serenity of the



climb. A Meadow Pipit also displayed its parachute song. Normally Meadow Pipits outnumber Skylarks on most mountain terrains but it was 20 to one here.

At the top a lovely Wheatear was searching the summit rocks for insects, showing off its white rump while trying to catch its lunch. On the way a Cuckoo sang from a small copse near the path, making not just one or two calls but continuing as long as I was in hearing range, which for a Cuckoo is some distance.

Near the bottom, the path crossed a stream and while waiting for the rest of the party I wandered a little way upstream and settled near a very small waterfall. It was

not long before a Dipper appeared with a beak full of food to feed young in a nest under the lip of the waterfall, just far enough away from the water itself.

Unlike most flying birds whose bones have a honeycomb structure, Dippers have solid bones so that they can 'walk' underwater to catch their prey - particularly Caddis Fly larvae. I watched for about 15 minutes in which time both parents came back two or three times with a beak full of food. I found it amazing that they could find so much nourishment in a relatively small stretch of stream to feed three or four young for three or so weeks. Even though I only recorded 12 species of bird, the walk will be remembered for some good bird watching/hearing.

Any visit to Wales must include a woodland walk, as the deciduous woods tend to contain species not found in the Southeast. There is lovely wood called Dert Fach on Sugar Loaf mountain containing mainly oak trees, which for some reason all seem to grow in a spiral, which gives the woods an intriguing and strange appearance. The canopy was quite thick so there was little undergrowth and at first there seemed to be little bird life, until I heard an unfamiliar song although I was sure I knew what it would be. Looking up I saw a brilliant white bird with a black head and tail above me. It was a Pied Flycatcher, only ever seen in Kent on passage as it is a migrant wintering in Africa. The darkish surroundings seemed to enhance its plumage as it flew around, and from above it appeared more black than white, with a prominent white wing bar. It is one of those birds to set one's pulse racing.

As we emerged from the wood to climb the hill I was delighted to find a pair of Whinchats among the bracken - another declining migrant.

Charles Trollope 240821 cetetal@btinternet.com

from far left: Tree Pipit, *Anthus trivialis*;

Redstart, *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*; Dipper, *Cinclus cinclus*;

Pied Flycatcher, *Ficedula hypoleuca*

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





Sedum 'Matrona' in late spring in a mixed bed with salvias, roses, anemones and scented climbing jasmine

In Your Garden

Good value plants

I like to think I move with the times when it comes to new plant introductions and am very appreciative of the merits of plant breeders, particularly when they can breed out a nasty strain of powdery mildew or can reduce the height of a favourite plant from 1.5m high down to a more manageable 0.6m (I'm thinking of asters and verbenas as examples).

However, one can get carried away and forget about all the other plants we once grew which have tremendous value in the garden, are hardy and fuss-free, easy to propagate and give a long show, particularly at this time of year. The trick is to have some of the old with some of the new.

Take sedums for example (or 'Hylotelephiums' as they are now). Early into growth in spring, they provide a structural element to borders from just a few inches high, are drought and disease resistant and an autumn/winter stalwart. My favourite two at the moment are the purple black stems of 'Purple Emperor' and the lovely white 'Iceberg'. I would be happy with just the foliage on any variety, but on come the flowerheads in late summer which are simply stunning and a magnet for pollinators. They respond well to the 'Chelsea Chop' too - in late May, I randomly reduce stems by about a third. Combined with division every few years,

this prevents the familiar stem-flop and keeps the crowns tidy.

Another highly valued, rather ubiquitous plant called *Euonymus fortunei* 'Emerald 'n' Gold' is a quietly understated hero in the garden. I prefer this variety to the more icy-looking 'Emerald Gaiety' as the leaves are shiny and the green and gold

is a better foil for neighbouring plants, although both are excellent for cutting and in bouquets.

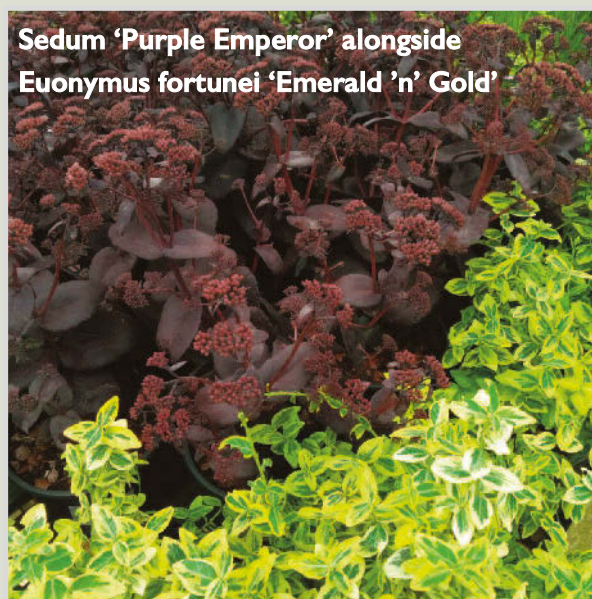
Very useful in early spring when planted alongside heathers and early yellow narcissi, handy at hiding tulip and allium foliage, it merges into the backdrop over the summer and in winter provides a wonderful contrast with bright dogwood stems, hellebores and snowdrops. I have even seen it climbing up, and hiding, downpipes on a shady wall. It really does tick a lot of boxes.

While new flower movements come and go, these two plants, and others besides, have a firm place in my garden plant lists.

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Sedum 'Purple Emperor' alongside *Euonymus fortunei* 'Emerald 'n' Gold'

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Above: The Drama Workshop offers fabulous entertainment and tuition during the summer holidays; Benenden Pre-School Open Day hints at a new school year while the village routine continues in Benenden's Community Shop
Front cover: In the shelter of a great oak, Hillyfields. Photograph: Peter Driver