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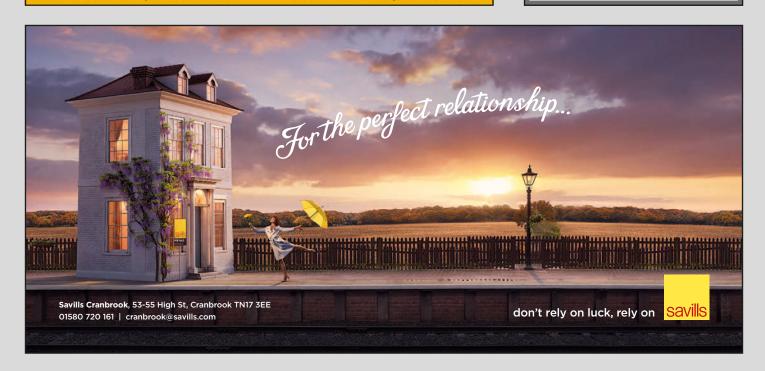
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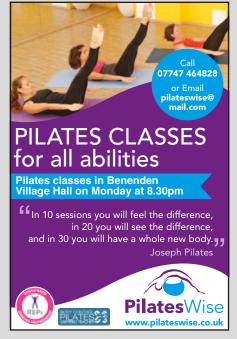


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Editorial



It was with thoroughly indecent haste that we went from celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee to the rather more sombre occasion of mourning her passing. In the height of summer, we in Benenden indulged in a joyful mass picnic that showcased all the good bits of life in the country; barely had we moved into autumn than the Union Jack on The Green was at half mast, as the nation joined together in sorrow for the end of a remarkable life and a notable era.

Now, I'm not a monarchist by any means, but I do believe Her Majesty was a great force for good in her 70 years on the throne, and that it was right for her long-lived efforts to be marked in a meaningful way. Of course, Benenden rose to the occasion magnificently, proving that while we have few equals in eating cucumber sandwiches and Victoria sponge to celebrate a happy milestone, we are no less proficient in finding the right tone when mournful respect is the order of the day.

So it was that upwards of 200 of us gathered around the flag to wave the late monarch fondly on her way, and to proclaim the ascent to the throne of King Charles III. I'm sure that not everybody there was an ardent royalist; perhaps there were a few republicans among the throng; maybe even a couple of well-disguised anarchists; but we didn't stand as individuals; varying political allegiances were not to the fore. We gathered as a village, to mark an occasion that was as hopeful as it was sad, and as ever it brought us that little bit closer together as a community.

It was a simple ceremony (captured in pictures on the back cover), with none of the incredible pomp that was to follow in London, but it served its purpose. People milled around afterwards, bonding and communing. A not insignificant number repaired to The Bull to ponder the moment over a pint.

It seemed as though the passing of one monarch and the accession of another had been marked appropriately. There was great sadness but, somehow, all was well in the heart of the village.

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)

Curate: Revd Ylva Blid-Mackenzie 01233 820100 rev.ylva@gmail.com (Sunday, Monday and Tuesday)

Churchwarden: David Collard 241944 julia.collard@btinternet.com

Churchwarden: Sue Fisher 241907 sue@undaunted.co.uk

www.benendenchurch.org 850849 benendenchurch@gmail.com

Please inform the Rector, Curate or Churchwardens if you, or anyone else, is ill.

Saturday I October 4pm Connect Four

at Mission Church, Sandhurst

Sunday 2 Ocober 8am BCP Communion I I am Harvest Service

at St Nicholas, Sandhurst and All-age Communion

followed by Harvest Lunch

Sunday 9 October 8am BCP Communion 10am Morning Worship

Sunday 16 October 8am Communion 10am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 23 October 8am Communion 10am Morning Worship

Sunday 30 October 8am Benefice Communion 10am Benefice Communion

at St Nicholas, Sandhurst

Morning Prayer 8am Mondays

Mission Church, Sandhurst

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

Morning Prayer 8am Tuesdays
Mid-week Communion 10am Tuesdays

Iden Green Congregational Church

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

Sunday Services 10am Morning Worship 5.30pm Evening Worship

The I0am Morning Worship is broadcast on our YouTube channel: search 'Iden Green Congregational Church'.

The Roman Catholic Chapel of Our Lady and St Joseph TN17 4EL

Fr Barry Grant 713364 www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org

Masses 9am Sundays 7.30pm Holy Days

From the Parish Registers

Weddings 3 September Lynsey Inglis and Max Williams

10 September Zoe Gaskill and Tom Brooks17 September Katy Watson and Tom Ford

24 September Catherine Sadler and Jeff Howarth

Church Letter



Harvest: A Time of Thanksgiving

'We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land But it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand'

As a child, growing up in an inner-city environment, I had little idea of how our food was produced. I always loved Harvest Festival, and sang with gusto about ploughing the fields etc, but the produce with which we decorated the church came from the greengrocer on the corner, and my idea of scattering seed was derived from a picture in the Children's Bible of the sower going out to sow, taking seed from a shoulder bag and flinging it in all directions.

I realise, too, how little I was aware of the gradual changing of the seasons. The year was divided into school terms, plus the highlights of Easter (eggs!), Christmas (stockings!) and birthdays (presents! cake!)

How different, now, living in this beautiful place, so aptly known as the Garden of England, intensely conscious of the sheer bounty of nature and the work of those who labour to produce our food, and the gradual changes from spring to summer, autumn to winter.

But I have also come to see another meaning in the well-loved lines of the harvest hymn. As those who care about the wellbeing of our world and our fellow beings, we are all called to work the ground and scatter good seed wherever we are, and though we may not see for ourselves the harvest we have prepared, we trust that our work and commitment have not been in vain. We might reflect that each one of us is somebody's 'harvest', the harvest of all the love, teaching and examples we have received throughout our lives.

As we mourn the death of our beloved Queen, we reflect on the rich harvest she has left us. St Paul describes 'the fruit of the Spirit': love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. It is no exaggeration to say that our late Queen brought to the life she had been called to every one of these gifts. King Charles speaks of all that he has seen in her: her life of duty and service, her love for her people, her deep faith; and he speaks of his determination to follow in her footsteps. Not only the members of her family, but so many others who have been moved and inspired by her life are very much the harvest of this remarkable woman.

At this season of harvest let us give thanks for all those whose love and wisdom have inspired, guided and encouraged us. And let us, in our turn, till the ground and sow the seed for harvests still to come, praying that our efforts maybe 'fed and watered', blessed, 'by God's almighty hand'.

Revd Dr Rosemary Kobus van Wengen, Assistant Priest

Village Calendar

October

Saturday I	Darts, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Sunday 2	St George's Harvest Lunch, St George's Church, 12.30pm	p.9
Friday 7	The Music Scholars of Benenden School, Benenden School Centenary Hall,	
	1.40pm and 7pm	p.13
Saturday 8	Churchyard Working Party, St George's, Benenden, 9.30-12noon	
Saturday 8	Grierson Galleries Art Show, Benenden Village Hall, 10-5pm	p.29
Saturday 8	Ladder Toss, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Sunday 9	Grierson Galleries Art Show, Benenden Village Hall, 10-4pm	p.29
Wednesday 12	Iden Green and Benenden WI, Lunch at the Red Lion, Brede	p.17
Saturday 15	Autumn Village Clean, Benenden's Community Shop, 9am	
Saturday 15	Benenden Bowls Club, Coffee Morning, Memorial Hall, 10am	
Saturday 15	Autumn Barbecue, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Monday 17	Parish Council Meeting, Iden Green Pavilion, 7pm	
Tuesday 18	Village Lunch, Benenden Village Hall, 12.30pm	p.23
Tuesday 18	Iden Green and Benenden WI, The Story of ENSA, Memorial Hall, 2pm	p.17
Saturday 22	Newcomers' Lunch, St George's Church, 12noon	p.9
Saturday 22	Quiz Night, St George's Club, 8.15pm	
Tuesday 25	Merry and Bright, Halloween tea and bingo, Memorial Hall, 2pm	p.19
Saturday 29	Race Night, St George's Club, 8.15pm	

Iden Green Toddler Group

Tuesdays during term time in Iden Green Congregational Church, 9-11.30am

Wednesday Coffee Mornings

Wednesdays in the Memorial Hall, 10-11.30am

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

Parish Council



For most people, the late Queen Elizabeth was the only Head of State we had known and I am sure you will agree that she showed a remarkable sense of duty and commitment throughout the more than 70 years of her reign, even insisting on fulfilling her constitutional responsibilities while in failing health close to the end of her life. Her dedication to public service seems to be in sharp contrast to our elected politicians: in case you hadn't noticed, we have had three prime ministers in three years and a devotion to duty and public service doesn't always seem to be a primary objective.

Meanwhile, back to matters Benenden, Beacon Field has been strewn with hay containing wildflower seeds from the parish churchyard and we should also have received hay from wildflower meadows at Great Dixter and the Rare Breeds Centre at Woodchurch by the time this magazine reaches you. It will be interesting to see the plant diversity begin to increase next year. Look out for vetches, bedstraws, yellow rattle and knapweed growing alongside oxeye daisy, teasel and, of course, some (but hopefully less) creeping thistle.

So, while there may be change and disruption at the top tiers of government, at the bottom tier (i.e. the parish council), life continues much as usual - and perhaps we should all be grateful for that.

On which note, the autumn village tidy will be held on Saturday 15 October. Keen litter pickers should meet at the village shop from 9am onwards, where they will be issued with the appropriate equipment and also a voucher for a drink and a cake at the Benenden's café. Please feel free to join us.

Peter Driver, Parish Councillor

Caroline Levett, Benenden Parish Council Clerk
07593 226462 clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org
For more information see our website www.benendenparishcouncil.org or find us on Facebook



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We have recommenced our regular monthly lunchtime meetings at The Bull, Benenden.

Currently there are vacancies for new members. If you are retired and would welcome friendly, relaxed company at a lunch, with interesting speakers, then please contact the Hon. Secretary on 01580 211814 for more information.



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Talking Point



Political challenges facing local voters

First it is a sad moment as we must acknowledge the amazing life of duty and service that the late Queen Elizabeth has given to the Nation, the Commonwealth, and over 600 charities and, as we now learn, so many unheard of kindnesses to so many of our citizens in a quiet unsung way right up to the two days before her passing.

In the days since her death at Balmoral we have been reminded of the distinctive characters of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland linked in our United Kingdom and we will all have views on any moves towards future national division.

We have a new prime minister who has faced a delay in being able to lead parliament in publicly tackling the gross financial and organisational challenges of the impact of Covid and the invasion of Ukraine, which are urgently important. And we face the prospect of significant new local changes. We face the prospect of a totally new parliamentary constituency, which will be rural in character, and new warding arrangements for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC).

The Parliamentary Boundary Commission, in a much-delayed report, has proposed the creation of an entirely new Weald of Kent constituency as part of a national review to balance the sizes of Parliamentary constituencies with around 70,000 voters. Benenden will be in this new constituency, with Biddenden as its geographical centre and bounded by smaller communities of Coxheath, Yalding, Marden, Staplehurst, Cranbrook, Hawkhurst, Tenterden, Headcorn, Leeds and Loose. The new constituency must be ready in place for a general election, provided this is not called before 2024.

Separately, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) has been reviewing TWBC members and wards, which was last undertaken in 2001. It has determined that TWBC should comprise 39 Councillors in 13 three-member wards instead of the current 48 members - some now in single and others in two and three-member wards.

The first draft of a fresh proposal for our parish has been drafted. Since 2001, Benenden has been linked with Cranbrook but the LGBC has proposed that we should now be included in a three-member ward with Sandhurst and Hawkhurst. In May 2024, all Tunbridge Wells borough councillors will stand for election. Thereafter, elections of a third of the seats will be held annually in turn in the first three years out of the members' four-year terms. An alternative debate continues to decide whether to elect the full council en bloc every four years, which might reduce costs and lead to greater continuity.

For our electorate, therefore, there is work to do to influence new structures for the parliamentary constituency and the new borough council ward and election arrangements. The proposed changes give us all the incentive to offer our views and the opportunity to contribute to the management of local affairs not in the continuing responsibility of our parish council.

Robin Dalton Holmes



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News and Events

St George's Harvest Lunch

We are delighted to be holding our Harvest Lunch after the I I am Harvest Festival service at St George's on Sunday 2 October. This year we have opted for a cold bring-and-share buffet. I will be placing a list of dishes that we require in the church nearer the time (to include sandwiches, sausage rolls, quiche, crisps, salads, cakes etc.). You can then add your name and contact number next to your contribution. Any food donations for the lunch will be very gratefully received.

As always, it is good to have an idea of numbers for catering purposes. If you are able to attend, or have any questions, please email me. It has been decided there will be no charge for the lunch this year due to the current economic climate, but we would greatly appreciate a financial donation to the church from those who are able.

Cathy Presgrave cathy.presgrave@gmail.com

Arnold Cole Trust

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

All applications in writing please to: The Secretary, Arnold Cole Trust, Scribbins, Benenden, Kent TN17 4DT. Please note applications must be received no later than 30 November.

Newcomers' lunch

We are planning to reintroduce our newcomers' lunch on 22 October in St George's Church from 12-2pm. This is an opportunity to meet people in the village, to find out what is going on and if there are areas of interest to you, both in church and in the community.

As always it is good to have an idea of numbers for catering purposes. In my absence Sally-Ann Marks has kindly offered to coordinate and would be happy to hear from you via her email address: sallymarks 100@hotmail.com
Helen Commander

Autumn pilgrimage

Our contemplative wanderings in the landscape continue. Please come and join us, Lyn Hayes and Revd Ylva Blid-Mackenzie, on Sunday 16 October, as we once again set off from St Nicholas, Sandhurst for an autumn walk. There will be plenty of chances along the way to stop and think, to reflect, to connect. Connect with ourselves, with the landscape, with the Spirit. We will be meeting at 11.45am for a 12noon start. Our walk this time will be about four miles and, as always, finish at St Nicholas with tea, coffee and cake. We would love to walk with you. Please bring a packed lunch and a drink if you want, as we will stop for a short break.

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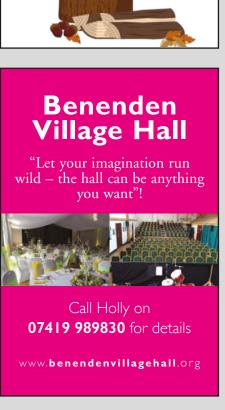
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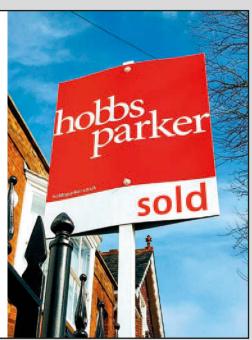
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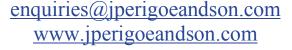
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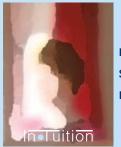
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Parent, Teacher and Friends Association

In an effort to reduce food wastage we will be kick-starting our fundraising efforts this term with an autumn produce sale. We have had an abundance of donations of garden fruit that would otherwise drop and rot so we are excited on 23 September to turn the primary school into a mini farmers' market selling homemade jams, chutneys, freshly made apple juice and surplus apples, blackberries and damsons. It will be a real demonstration of the community coming together to share and support and we hope everyone will enjoy the delicious offerings from local gardens.

We are also relaunching our free easyfundraising page. Online shopping is part of our lives and by signing up to easyfundraising every time you shop, they give us a little back. All you have to do is go to www.Easyfundraising.com, choose Benenden C.E Primary School as your cause and register with your name and email. Then either download the app or shop through their website to do all your online shopping - no extra cost to you and a big thank you from us.

For more information on how you can support or become involved in the PTFA, please scan our QR code or visit our website www.benendencep.kent.sch.uk/Parents/PTFA

Rachel Tinker, Benenden CEP, PTFA Chair

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Music Scholars' concert

In a break from tradition, Benenden School have invited us to join them in their new school hall for this year's Friends of St George's Music Scholars concert. Last year we welcomed the Music Scholars to St George's after a break of two years. This year with more scholars than ever there will be two concerts on Friday 7 October: the first at 1.40pm and the second at 7pm. It would be wonderful to see as many as possible from the local community attend, it's a great opportunity for us to hear some wonderful music and see the new facilities, not to mention the wonderful Benenden hospitality. It would be helpful to have an idea of numbers - there will be no charge for tickets just a retiring collection in aid of the Friends of St George's. If you can please e-mail joanne.clube@gmail.com or sign up in the village shop or at the back of the church to give us an idea of numbers. We look forward to an opportunity to get together and celebrate our local musical talent.

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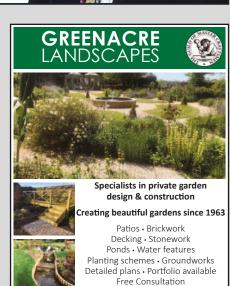




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Bonfire and Fireworks

Remember, remember the Fifth of November. So goes the nursery rhyme and this year we are hoping you will keep the date free as the ever-popular Benenden bonfire and firework display returns.

We are grateful to Benenden School for again allowing us to use the Pasture field to the left of the main drive leading up to the school, but there will be no vehicular access or parking on school property. Pedestrian access will only be via the main gate on Cranbrook Road.

This year, mindful of noise issues for neighbours and animals and to reduce environmental impact, we have joined with Benenden School and will in effect 'share' the display, with their students viewing from the school side and all our activities taking place in the Pasture at the lower end of the main drive.

We will be selling food from the barbecue and Hannah's famous chilli, along with hot chocolate and the usual licensed bar with a selection of ales, bottled lager and mulled wine. There will be music before the event, together with sweets and multi-use LED light sticks available for sale.

As always, we are seeking volunteers to help with the event be it before, during or after or indeed all three of those. If you think you could help, please contact sue_penny@btinternet.com

Once again, we have our three main sponsors: Benenden Hospital, Jubilee Hire and Tate Fencing and we thank them for their ongoing support. My personal thanks go to members of the committee who give significant time and focus to making this event happen.

We look forward to seeing you at what, for many, has always been a 'must do' event on the village calendar. Gates open at 5.30pm on Saturday 5 November.

Grant Matthews Chair, Benenden Bonfire Society www.benendenfireworks.co.uk

Benenden Village Trust

Benenden Village Trust, which runs the village hall and other local leisure facilities, has a new chairman. Martin Dickson was elected to the position in July by fellow trustees in succession to Jonathan Strong, who resigned in June as chairman and trustee for personal reasons.

Martin, a Benenden resident for nearly five years, said he wanted to continue Jonathan's tremendous work to increase the trust's already large contribution to village life. Apart from the village hall, BVT owns the Iden Green Pavilion, the recreation grounds and children's playgrounds in both villages and St George's Hall at the Benenden crossroads, as well as land on which sit the Bowls Club, the Iden Green Tennis Club and housing at Woodcock Lane.

At the AGM in July, acting chairman Kent Barker gave an update on BVT's work in the wake of Covid. As pandemic restrictions eased, the pace of activities had been picking up, although there was still some catching-up to achieve.

Village hall use had recovered to prepandemic levels and continues to be well used. New wi-fi had been installed, along with a new face-recognition entry system to ensure improved security, and there was an ongoing programme of general maintenance and improvements. BVT had commissioned a survey of the hall's energy systems, consumption, use, sustainability and alternatives, including heat pump technology and solar panels. The trust would like to achieve net zero emissions by 2030 in a cost-effective manner, as well as addressing increasing energy costs.

Trustees Sally-Ann Marks and Richard Stubbings retired by rotation and were re-elected, together with co-opted trustee Simon Brown. Full minutes of the AGM and the trust's annual report and financial statements for the year to 31 March are available on the BVT website at: www.benendenvillagetrust.org/minutes Caroline Levett, BVT Manager





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Iden Green and Benenden WI

We had such fun on 6 September when we met to chat and socialise with friends old and new. Thanks are extended to the organisers, who facilitated the evening and provided the refreshments, activities and chocolate. We also enjoyed a delicious meal at the Castle Inn on the 14th, when we were able to meet informally and share our memories of the Queen. Fish and chips were very popular and everyone enjoyed themselves.

On 20 September we all gathered to listen to Katherine Hook talking about Sloe Seduction. She explained how she picks the sloes herself and buys the gin at a local shop. Then the ingredients are mixed in a demijohn with sugar and left for a year. We all had a taste of the dark chocolate truffle and it was most delicious.

Our October gatherings include a visit to the Red Lion on the Wednesday 12 and on Tuesday 18 we have Delia Taylor coming to tell us about the story of ENSA. We are pleased to welcome our new members and hope that many more will feel emboldened to join us in the future.

Jackie Liffen 752232 WI@daisystar.co.uk

Benenden Players

We were very pleased to welcome some new faces to the auditions for 'Allo 'Allo and we have a talented cast ready to start rehearsals in October. For the shows on 27 and 28 January the village hall will be converted into a French café and tickets will be available to buy from the end of November. But, before then, we will be getting into a festive mood with our Christmas Crackers Revue on 16 December, packed full of song, music, dance and sketches. Tickets go on sale at the end of October. So lots to look forward to over the next few months.

Ruth Clark

Benenden Branch of the Maidstone & The Weald Conservative Association

Members and local Conservative Supporters' Supper at **The Bull** in Benenden on **Saturday 19 November**

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and
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If you would be interested in attending please contact:
Sally-Ann Marks 243141
sallymarks100@hotmail.com

Conservative Association

At the recent annual general meeting of the Maidstone & The Weald Conservative Association, Sally-Ann Marks was elected to the chair. She would like to celebrate this with a two-course branch supper for local residents at the Bull in Benenden on Saturday 19 November, where our principal speaker will be lain Dale, political journalist, author and broadcaster with LBC Radio, who lives in the Tunbridge Wells Borough.

Our MP Helen Grant has also agreed to join this party and both guests should be able to update us on the new political regime in parliament. We would welcome new members and even if you felt frustrated by the protracted members' stage in the choice of a new Conservative party leader, members had the right to participate if their membership began more than three months beforehand.

Tickets for the supper are likely to cost £35 but this is not a fundraising event - our wish is to revitalise our branch. Branches in the new constituency area will be much involved in the selection of an MP candidate and the establishment of a new administrative committee for the Weald of Kent constituency. It will be good to be a group of smaller towns and villages with common issues, which are often neglected when, as previously, one large town dominates the membership.

Robin Dalton Holmes, Branch Secretary



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Benenden Pre-School

The children at Pre-school have been celebrating the life of Queen Elizabeth. They enjoyed listening to the wonderful story book The Queen's Hat by Steve Antony which follows her Majesty's hat as it is blown by the wind around famous London landmarks, including Trafalgar Square and the London Eye.

The children also watched the very engaging and amusing sketch from the Jubilee when the Queen invited Paddington Bear to the Palace for tea. Following the example of marmalade sandwiches in Paddington's hat and the Queen's handbag, the children made their own sandwiches. They spread their own butter, using knives carefully and chose between strawberry and raspberry jam. They relished eating them for a snack.

Queen Elizabeth was an incredible role model for us all. She was steadfast, clear-sighted, respectful and kind, meeting every challenge presented to her; qualities we nurture in our children.

Lucy Oakley, Supervisor supervisor@benendenpreschool.co.uk

Merry and Bright Club

We are pleased that our club is doing very well - we now have over 20 members and more are planning to join in January. We have three meetings left this year: Halloween tea and bingo on 25 October; Christmas table decorations and tea on 22 November; and our Christmas party featuring an 11-strong ukulele band and special cake made by Dawn on 13 December. We look forward to seeing everyone.

Laraine Penny 241763 Joan Hagens 240672

Talking Shop

Many of you may have noticed a new, smiley face in Benenden's recently. We are delighted to welcome Karen Saunders to the shop team as a new manager. Karen has spent a few weeks learning the ropes and has frequently been working on a voluntary basis in the shop as she has been working out her notice on her previous job. Some of you might have recognised her from her caretaking role at the village hall.

Karen is a local girl. Having grown up in Biddenden, she gained a degree in Medical Physics in London and for the next 21 years worked as a Clinical Cardiac Physiologist and a lecturer in Cardiology, Maths and Physics for medical students. In 2013, she felt it was time to 'retire' from the relentless world of medicine and, fortunately for us, she headed home to Benenden, where she is determined to remain. Since moving back she has trained as an Ofsted-registered children's nanny in recognition of the fact that she found it so hard to get reliable good care for her own daughter as a working mother.

Karen's grown-up daughter is now studying at the University of Valencia in Spain and it is clear that Karen doesn't intend to sit back and relax. She is proud to be part of Benenden's special village community and very happy to take on her role as one of the managers at the shop.

This impressive, friendly and steadfast lady has taken on her new role with ease and has already become a very popular member of the team. Welcome, Karen. You are just what we needed.

Bev Beveridge info@benendens.co.uk www.benendens.co.uk

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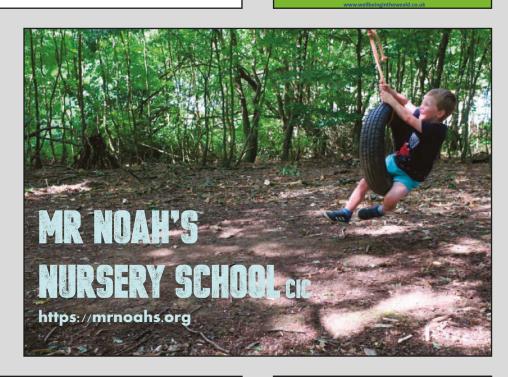
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Benenden School

As a community, we have marked the passing of the Queen in the past few days. On Friday morning the whole school gathered in the hall for prayers, reflecting on the inspirational life of a truly remarkable monarch, and a Sunday evening service was held in Her Majesty's memory, celebrating her life through hymns and prayer. We have a series of commemorative events planned for those students who will be in school with us on the day of the state funeral.

Meanwhile, we have continued to focus on school life continuing as normally as possible. All students have quickly settled into the important routine of learning, while Six Twos have been taking internal exams and preparing their UCAS applications. It is pleasing to see the whole school has been inspired by the excellent public exam results last month and I know that the new Upper Fifth and the Six Twos are keen to emulate - and hopefully even surpass - these achievements.

The new timetable has also been introduced, which allows for greater contact time with teachers for the exam years and enables us to offer a wider range of elective courses.

I would like to thank members of the village for your tremendous support for our concert from the Philharmonia Orchestra on Sunday 2 October. Please note that this event is now fully booked, but we have great pleasure in inviting you to our first commercial events, being held in December: the theatre will host A Christmas Carol on 2-3 December and the Len Phillips Swing Orchestra will perform in our new Centenary Hall on 10-11 December. Tickets are available at www.Benenden.school/events.

Samantha Price, Headmistress

Village Hall

In what is always a season of transformation, the hall is going through its own period of change as we look for a fresh face to join our small team. Although we will be eternally grateful for the great job that Karen, our caretaker, has done over the past few years, she's now ready to pass the torch to someone else, and we're hoping that we'll find that person amongst the talented community of Benenden.

Benenden Village Trust is looking to appoint a friendly and reliable person to contribute to the smooth running of the hall on a part-time basis. The successful applicant will be self-motivated, dependable and trustworthy with good communication skills. Flexibility is required to meet variable needs, consistent with the day-to-day use of the hall, with some relatively short visits, including weekends and evenings as necessary.

Working with the manager and the cleaner, responsibilities include, but are not limited to, ensuring that the hall is presented clean and fully operational; liaising with hirers; opening and closing the hall for non-regular hirers; and monitoring the security of the building. Salary: £12.36 per hour plus contributory pension scheme. Hours: average seven per week. To be reviewed.

If you are interested in finding out more please contact:

Holly Clayson, Manager 07419 989830 enquiries@benendenvillagehall.org www.benendenvillagehall.org

Village lunch

The village lunch will take place on Tuesday 18 October in the village hall at 12.30pm. £5 each and all welcome. Please could you let me know if you would like to come by Thursday 13 October, so we can plan and shop, as well as cook.

Sheila Hume 854627

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Primary School

At the end of the summer term, we were delighted to hear that we had been awarded the Eco-Schools Green Flag with distinction. The class 'eco warriors' worked really hard all year to achieve this. They ran an eco-day, where classes had to try to use as little electricity as possible, they organised recycling competitions, and met regularly to carry out evaluations of the school's environmental impact.

The Eco-Schools team said: "This is a terrific application and a great year's work. The Eco-Committee and the entire school should feel very proud." I would like to say a huge thank you to Mrs Brook, who supported our eco warriors to achieve the award.

We have welcomed 31 new children to the school this year and they have all settled really well into school life. We have also started the new school year with a full complement of staff and we were delighted to welcome three new members: Mr Emmett, who is teaching in Year 6; Mrs Newman, who is teaching in Reception; and Mrs Kirby, who is supporting in Year 1.

The school community held a special assembly to mark the passing of Queen Elizabeth. The children were superb, and over the days that followed, we continued to discuss and explore her Majesty's amazing life and commitment to duty. We were also excited to celebrate the proclamation of our new king, King Charles III.

Lindsay Roberts, Executive Headteacher 240565 office@benenden-cep.kent.sch.uk www.benenden-cep.kent.sch.uk



Planning Matters

For full details of the Parish Council's comment please see minutes of meetings.

- 22/02043/OUT Culpeppers, Coldharbour Road. Outline permission (All matters reserved) - Residential Development containing 8 detached dwellings.
- 22/02438/FULL 6 Vere Meadows. Erection of a single storey flat roof infill rear extension, associated internal and external hard landscaping alterations.
- 22/02277/FULL and 22/02278/LBC
 Benenden C Of E Primary School, The
 Green. Change of Use and conversion of
 buildings from School to dwellings including
 2 new dormer windows, new rooflights and
 various repairs and alterations.
- 22/02359/FULL Barrow, Halden Lane.
 Replacement of existing conservatory with new sunroom and provision of a new glazed link porch.
- 22/02302/LBC Frame Farm, Iden Green Road. Remodelling of an existing second floor master bedroom, dressing room and bathroom.
- 22/02451/FULL The Barn House, Cranbrook Road. Proposed revised garage to approved scheme 21/03599/FULL.

More planning matters at: benendenparishcouncil.org



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Topical health

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

After a rapid assessment of a casualty, it is important to start CPR quickly if the person has been found to be not breathing. If you are alone, you should call for help; if this means calling an ambulance you should, as they will talk you through the process. It is also best, if you can, to send for a defibrillator at this point.

Lay the person flat on their back, preferably on the floor. It is imperative you start chest compressions as soon as possible. Lock your hands one over the back of the other and place the heel of the lower hand over the lower half of the sternum - the lower chest. Keep your arms locked straight and lean into the casualty pressing their chest down, about two inches, or five centimetres, and then lean back allowing their chest to rise. Try to deliver 100-120 compressions a minute. Current advice does not necessarily include breaths, although survival is often better with them, so the chest compressions should continue at the above rate.

If you are happy to give breaths, place one hand on their forehead to tilt the casualty's head back and pinch their nose and the other to lift their chin with two fingers and partially open their mouth. Take a deep breath and having made a seal around their mouth, deliver a breath over about one second checking that their chest rises. Come off of their mouth and take another deep breath while the casualty's chest falls and deliver a second breath. Do this at a rate of 30 compressions to two breaths continuously until either the casualty starts breathing, you are too tired to continue or more help arrives.

In future columns, we will consider the use of the defibrillator in the CPR process as well as how one places a casualty in the recovery position if they are breathing unaided.

www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/unresponsive-casualty/how-to-do-cpr-on-an-adult/

Peter Ellis

Benenden Hospital

I was shocked by the results of a survey carried out by the Department for Health and Social Care in March 2021, which highlighted how access to topics concerning women's health is limited. It also informed the first government-led Women's Health Strategy for England.

Out of nearly 100,000 respondents to the survey, fewer than one in five felt they had enough information on menstrual wellbeing and fewer than one in ten that they had enough information on the menopause and gynaecological conditions.

World Menopause Day, held on 18 October each year, seeks to change this statistic. With support from the International Menopause Society and World Health Organisation, the purpose is to raise awareness of the menopause and the support available. Menopause awareness isn't constrained to one day as the whole of October is Menopause Awareness Month. It is also a topic which, I believe, should be spoken about all year round.

At Benenden Hospital we are constantly seeking ways to support our female staff and those who visit us as patients. I am pleased to announce the success of our online Female Health Hub, which was launched on 5 August this year. The hub, aimed at women of all ages, acts as a point of reference to put women in control of their own health. No more feeling alone with their symptoms, now women can read about a variety of topics: endometriosis, heavy, painful periods and post menopause.

We also offer our patients a range of private gynaecology surgery and services. From continence care and MonaLisa Touch laser treatment to ovarian cyst removal and hysterectomy, I'm so proud of our caring staff who ease our patients' minds.

As we move into the autumn, I wish all those within the community the best of health.

Jane Abbott, Hospital Director and Chief Nurse



Jay Weekes

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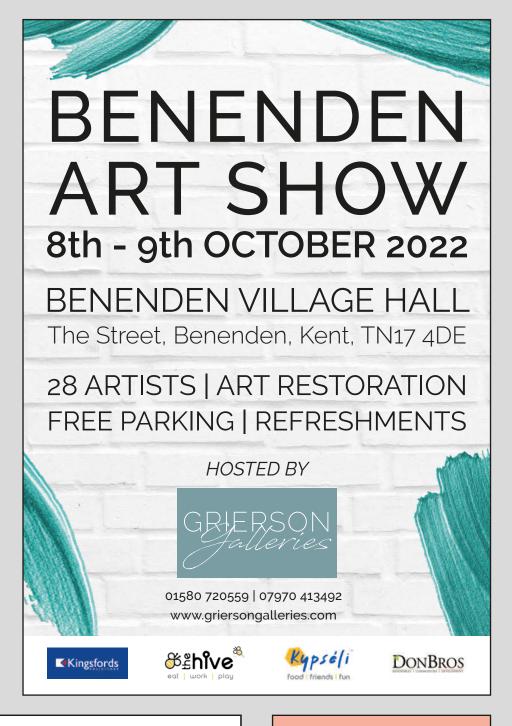
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Event Preview

Benenden Art Show

Weekend of talent that puts village on the cultural map

Grierson Galleries is absolutely delighted to be once again showcasing the work of 28 Wealden artists on 8 and 9 October at Benenden Village Hall. From glassware to ceramics, oils to water colours, photography, ink, wash, charcoal, clay, mosaics and mixed media, you name it, the artists will be there and excited to talk to visitors about their passion and talents.



Scarlett Woodman

Last year we were thrilled to welcome more than 500 visitors who came to support, buy and thoroughly enjoy the

Michael Ayrton

Anthony Wes

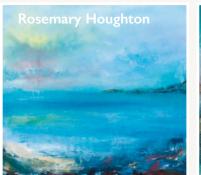
huge variety of different artists from across the region, and this year we are again featuring Grierson Galleries' Cranbrookbased art restorer and

adviser, Nick Hampshire, who will be working up on the balcony, showing how he restores oil paintings to their former glory.

We are very proud that Benenden Art Show is now well

and truly a part of the region's artistic and cultural calendar, a region that has been a central hub for artistic work and an inspiration for centuries. Above all, the show is renowned for its diversity and fun.

Some of our artists have exhibited internationally, and all are from the Weald or







David Aspinall

slightly further away. The wonderfully atmospheric water colours of the

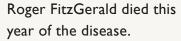
renowned David Aspinall return and Benenden residents Mike Unsworth and Helen Jewsbury are again present this year, but we are also delighted to be welcoming some new faces, including Annie Oulton from Canterbury, whose ink, wash,

charcoal and clay works come together to make expressive

drawings of the human figure; and emerging young Maidstone artist Isobel Kemp, whose colourful works are fun and eye-catching as well as demonstrating huge talent.



We shall be collecting for Pancreatic Cancer, as our dear friend and artist



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Saturday 8 October | 10am-5pm Sunday 9 October | 10am-4pm Refreshments available Free entry





Clubs, Sports and Recreation



Village's voice can keep the bells of Benenden ringing

"From time to time, complaints are made about the ringing of church bells. It seems strange that a generation which tolerates the uproar of the internal combustion engine and the wailing of the jazz band should be so sensitive to the one loud noise that is made to the glory of God. England, alone in the world, has perfected the art of change ringing and the true ringing of bells by rope and wheel, and will not lightly surrender her unique heritage". Dorothy L. Sayers, foreword to her most famous detective novel, The Nine Tailors, 1934. Or, as ringers have long said, there's always one (but almost never more than one) in every parish: someone who moves into a house near the church which has been ringing its bells, to the general pleasure of the community, for centuries (over 600 years in our case), and then think they have the right to silence the bells for their convenience, or control when they may be rung.

Fortunately at Benenden almost all those close to the church strongly support and love the sound of the bells: Charlotte and Don, Robin and Jane, and other Green residents, thank you very much, specially remembering Ruth Tolhurst, who loved them so much she left a generous bequest to the bells, which we used to restore our handbells.

Church bells are never rung without a good reason, or just because the ringers feel like it. All ringing is very strictly controlled, under the sole authority, at law, of the Rector (or in his absence the churchwardens), who exercises his powers in consultation with the ringers, the Parochial Church Council and the community, in accordance with a written Bells Policy agreed with the PCC (copy available to anyone), which limits when and for how long the bells may be rung.

Our unique national music of English change ringing is just like any other musical instrument, in that it is highly skilled and needs many hours of practice to attain even the most basic level of proficiency. Like any other musical instrument, there is practice, and there are public performances, with much overlap between them, as a ringer is learning and improving whenever he/she rings.

Apart from the usual weekly practice on open bells, much basic tuition and practice is carried out on silenced bells, so that the neighbours do not have to put up with the clanging of a single bell as a beginner learns to handle. In recent years, technology has made it possible also to practise more advanced skills on a simulator, in which a ringer can ring a silenced bell with a virtual, on-screen band. But even with all such aids, there is no possible

substitute for ringing bells open, since one of the most difficult skills to acquire is that of listening to the striking of one's own bell among the others, involving a high degree of teamwork and much practice.

Ringing as a public performance occurs for any church service, weddings (18 this year), and in 'peals' and 'quarter-peals'. Peals are the top level of ringing - over 5,000 true changes rung to the highest standard of accurate and musical striking (if not, the peal attempt is stopped), taking about three hours. A total of 193 full peals have been rung on Benenden bells, the first in 1803 - so that's an average of less than one per year. In practice, of course, they are far from evenly spread over those 219 years, there being many years with no peals at all and the very occasional year of several; there have been none since 2017, with none at present planned or booked. So full peal attempts are relatively rare.

Much more frequent are quarter-peals of 1,250 changes taking around 50 minutes, up to a dozen of which are likely to be attempted in any calendar year and about half of which are successful. All such performances are the subject of a specific request to the Rector beforehand, who may withhold permission if it is to take place at some inappropriate time, or suggest a different time.

The Queen's sad passing, of course, brought together a band at short notice to ring at midday on 8 September half-muffled, which is traditional during mourning. A half muffle is a pad which is attached to one side clapper so that, instead of hearing two 'strike notes' of the bell, we hear one strike and an 'hum note' - like an echo - instead. As I was away at the time, Katie Dellow and Robin Dalton Holmes did a brilliant job in working out how to attach the muffles. These were taken off to mark the Proclamation of King Charles III and put back on again to mark the funeral on 19 September.

Our bells are well known and liked by ringers everywhere, ours being the only church with a full ring of 12 bells (actually 12 plus 1, being the semitone bell, which gives a true light octave so valuable in training) in the county apart from Canterbury Cathedral. Consequently, they are

in some demand by ringers all over Kent and Sussex who aspire to the most advanced level of performance upon 12 bells. So Benenden has an important role in ringing training, not only for the local band but as an advanced training facility for ringers throughout Kent and its long-established ringing Association.

We therefore take measures far beyond those taken by most other towers, to ensure that our bells are not a nuisance to neighbours. We not only practise, as above, on silenced bells, but also have sound control shutters in the belfry to reduce the sound level at all times other than for church services. Together with the Bells Policy, these measures are designed to protect our bells against complaints, which may be taken to local environmental health officers or a court of law, to whom it can be shown that every possible effort has been made to ensure that the bells cannot be held to be a nuisance and that the ringing of them is both reasonable and necessary for the maintenance of this highly skilled musical art.

It is very sad to have to report that one local complainant, whose complaint was rejected by the EHO, has descended into attempts at intimidating the ringers, with abusive threats and foul language witnessed, now recorded by the police as a section 4 public order offence - pointless behaviour wholly alien to the courtesies otherwise so universal in our community. We hope this will now cease.

But there is one more important factor in this, and that is the support of the community. If, in the event of any further vexatious attempt to appeal to any EHO or court of law, we can demonstrate that the ringing of our bells carries the overwhelming support of the local community, this will guarantee that it will not succeed. So please, don't be silent on this matter - if you like hearing our magnificent bells, please take a moment to email me and let me know what you think; and if you too feel that the only good bell is a silent one and the only good ringer a dead one, let me know as well; we do need to get some picture of what you, the people of this parish, actually think about your bells. Thank you. Rod Lebon rodericklebon@hotmail.com

Enterprising Locals



'Green' milk: local cows, local grass and minimal miles

Minnie Garnier visits Hinxden to meet the family creating a range of delicious dairy products on our doorstep

Hinxden Farm Dairy supplies many in the parish with doorstep deliveries of milk, cream, yogurt and much more. They were a lifesaver for lots of us during lockdown(s), when many more people signed up to receive Hinxden's delicious products. In fact, after restrictions were lifted, not only did all the old business/commercial customers come back but also a lot of new wholesale customers. As a result, they have increased the number of delivery vans and staff from the local area.

But how much do we know about the dairy itself? Hinxden is a family-run business and Katy (25) and Rebecca Manford (28) are now the fourth generation to help run the farm. I say farm because there is a lot more than milking a few cows involved. Particularly now. The Hinxden cows are largely grass-fed, with maize and grass silage to supplement their diet, in addition to a ration of cow nuts, to ensure they have the right balance of nutrients. At the

moment there is little or no grass and the Manfords are therefore feeding their stock almost 90% of what they would anticipate feeding them in winter. Fortunately, they have good stocks of homegrown hay, barley straw and silage, which the cows can tuck into whenever they want.

The cows have also been struggling in the recent hot weather: the black and white Holsteins more than the paler, and presumably more reflective, Guernseys. Extra water troughs have been laid on and fortunately the majority of the



dairy's fields have mature trees and hedgerows to give shade. There are also large fans blowing through the milking parlour. The welfare of the cows is the Manford's primary objective, not least because a happy, healthy cow is a productive cow.

The dairy is milking 230 cows twice a day (out of a total herd of 500), processing the milk six days a week. Where they used to send a tanker of milk to Arla several times a week, now, due to the increased demand, they are sending only one. The dairy employs 23 local people - most of them for over 15-20 years. Their vans go out six days a week to supply the local villages with milk, mostly in reusable glass bottles (please don't recycle, just rinse for the dairy to collect) and to wholesale customers all over Kent and East Sussex. Regretfully, they are not able to use



electric vehicles for their rounds yet. They did get invited to give one a trial but the battery technology is not yet advanced or powerful enough to take the weight of product, chill it, and drive around with the lights and windscreen wipers on. They did even wonder about going back to the old ways of horse and cart deliveries when the petrol shortage struck!

If you thought it was a low-tech industry, you'd be wrong. The cows are fitted with collars which log them in when they are milked, record how much milk they give and monitor how much feed they consume out of their individually allocated ration.

The electronic bands on their 'ankles' monitor activity used to track fertility patterns.

Hinxden has been a dairy farm since 1930 and they have bred generations of dairy cows.

They don't buy in stock but use advanced genetics to breed replacement heifers with specific, desirable dairy traits such as hardy feet, strong legs, easy calving and well



attached udders. They plan ahead to improve longevity and fertility. In order to achieve continuity of supply, calving takes place all year round, with young stock, once they are weaned, reared at Sarnden Farm and Hole Park.

Local dairy, local grass, reusable glass bottles and minimal miles - you don't get much 'greener' milk than that.





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Food and Drink



Raising a glass, or two, to dear Tracy

Peter Thomas has news of a wine tasting in memory of one of our great friends

I'm sure that many of you out there are missing Tracy Claridge as much as I am. On a personal note, many of my abiding memories of the great man are from our Benenden Wine Committee meetings. I say 'memories', although many details of the meetings were forgotten by the following morning, due largely to the enthusiastic consumption of the interesting bottles that made their way there; but that didn't stop us consulting our scribbled notes and getting the next village tasting on the go.

Well, my fellow committee members and I have no intention of letting TC's legacy fade, so we've come up with the idea of a perpetual, annual Tracy Claridge Memorial tasting, designed to give our friend his due and keep his vinous spirit alive in Benenden.

The first of these is due to take place at our usual, kindly donated, venue, in the cafe at Benenden School on Friday 18 November (7pm for 7.30), where the aim will be to showcase some wines that have a Tracy 'back story', which were either a big part of his life or stir our memories of him. Old friends and colleagues will be badgered mercilessly for donations (although I don't imagine they'll need much badgering), thereby keeping down our costs and allowing us to donate substantial profits to one

or more charities nominated by his loving partner Deborah, who has given her blessing to the event.

I've started the ball rolling by making a donation of my own. It was one of Tracy's irritating habits that whenever I proudly introduced him to a 'new' wine producer from a region I'd just unearthed, he'd reveal that he already knew it very well, and would proceed to give me chapter and verse on it.

So, when I told him I'd discovered this great town called Ribeauville, in Alsace, and could heartily recommend he visit it, I should have known what was coming. "Who did you buy from," he asked. "Jean Sipp, at the top of the town," I replied, bringing out a bottle and hoping for a pat on the back. "You should have gone to Louis Sipp, at the bottom of town," he shrugged. "I worked there for a few harvests. Louis was a lovely man. Go there next time and ask if anybody remembers the huge Englishman with the beard."

I did as I was told, went there in the spring and brought back half a dozen bottles of Louis' 2018 Muehlforst Riesling, which I think you'll enjoy as much as I did.

Of course, the success of this venture depends entirely on you, the wine drinkers of Benenden, so we'd be very grateful if you were to dig in your pockets, pay £30 a head for tickets at the community shop and come along and drink well to Tracy's memory, with food provided.

There are still a few tickets available at the village shop, so please be quick. 35

In Your Garden

The overgrown weed that taught me to plant tall

I used to help maintain a large, two-acre garden on the outskirts of Horsmonden. The owner was a very keen gardener and plantswoman and was fortunate enough to have a very obliging husband with deep pockets. I largely 'cut my teeth' in gardening there and spent a happy three years or so assisting her in developing the garden.

She was dotty about perennials, grasses and dahlias shrubs were assigned to a border of their own - and she had a good eye for a plant, too, which she mostly curated from a small plant nursery conveniently located on her way back from the school run on the outskirts of Battle. I once counted the total number of borders I had to maintain: 17!

Each week that I turned up for work there would be a little group of new purchases waiting to be planted and I distinctly remember seeing a very tall, bendy, narrowleaved plant called 'Helianthus salicifolius', which was not yet in flower - and frankly I thought it looked like an overgrown weed.

How wrong I was. By the end of summer this beautiful, statuesque plant was well over nine feet tall with masses of waving stems and small yellow sunflower-like flowers in abundance. Threading through nearby was a generous drift of salvia uliginosa, with piercing blue flowers mingling with a tall miscanthus sinensis 'Malepartus' and a giant scabious. Orange and cerise pink cactus dahlias filled in any gaps, with lots of fluffy pennisetum flowerheads at the front making an image that has stayed with me and ensured that I have never shied away from planting tall.

Eupatoriums are another favourite, which I like to partner with pink or purple loosestrifes, filipendulas or veronicastrums, which all look

good in the winter months, too. My mother, who is very good at partnering tall plants, had border earlier this year (note 'pre-drought'), consisting of teasels, crocosmia 'Lucifer' and

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Above: Sharing national and local events: The proclamation of King Charles III on Sunday II September; putting the half muffles on the church bells as the band in the belfry get ready to ring before the State Funeral for Her Majesty The Queen; Jazz and Blues at the Pavilion; Benenden Hospital's Continence Care team; John Marshall presenting the Memorial Trophy to Ray Cheeseman Front cover: Joining with the country in mourning the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Photograph: Amelia Thomas