

Elmsted with Hastingleigh Community News

*St James the Great
Elmsted*



*St Mary the Virgin
Hastingleigh*

June 2020

40p



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June

in Elmsted with Hastingleigh

Wow! What a jam-packed edition we have this month!

Thank you everyone that has sent in articles and photos. It looks as if there were lots of people celebrating VE Day, despite plans having to be cancelled.

We have requests for photos (p18) and thanks (p24) for next month's edition, so please keep sending them in.

All the time our printers are printing, we will endeavour to make sure the Community News is delivered; and if they do have to close, we will produce an electronic version. If this becomes necessary, and you would like receive an electronic copy, please send your email address to the Secretary at secretary.communitynews@gmail.com GDPR will be adhered to.

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Submissions

The *Community News* takes no responsibility for misleading advertising or incorrect editorial supplied to us in good faith.

Please provide any promotional or editorial content in Word format rather than pdf. For length, grammar and style issues the Editor reserves the right to edit it.

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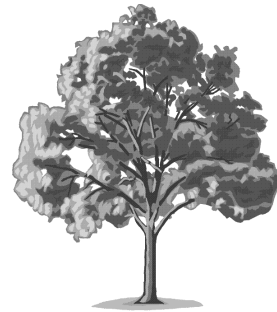
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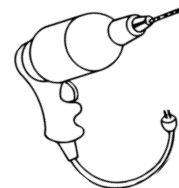
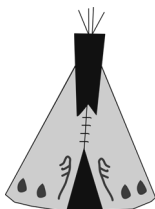
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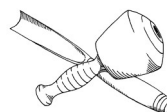
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Hastingleigh with Elmsted WI

I joined the W.I., with my friend Cheryl, in 2006. We weren't sure what was involved, but we thought we'd give it a go. She lived next door to Jill, the then President, and we thought we'd go along together for the January meeting. We were welcomed when we arrived, and soon the evening's business started. The W.I. magazine was changing, and the ladies were not happy about it! There was quite a heated discussion, and Cheryl and I realised that these ladies had a voice and weren't prepared to put up with what they thought was wrong.

One of the first things I was told about the W.I. was that it was, and still is, 'fun and friendship'. I've learned many new things, either from speakers, or from courses or classes we have taken part in, or places we have visited. Our East Kent Federation office arranges trips, and we've also done some ourselves. With the Federation, I've been on a tour of the B.B.C. and to the Supreme Court in London. Our Institute has arranged theatre and cinema trips, visits to gardens and castles, and several years ago some of us went to Monet's Garden in Giverny. We have craft mornings where we've learned decoupage, paint-marbling and iris-folding for cards.

All these events are extra to the monthly meetings we have, that form the core of our membership. We choose our speakers democratically. Some can be lively, some not so, but with every one, we learn something that we hadn't known an hour before. After the speaker has finished, we have a bit of social time, when we can have a cup of tea and a biscuit – and on occasion a gorgeous home-baked cake – and chat with our friends. If time allows, we have a social half hour after tea. We've had quizzes and played indoor curling.

If you think you might like to join us, we would love to see you. We meet on the first Thursday of the month, at 7:30 p.m. We finish around 10 p.m. You can come along for just the monthly meeting, or you can get involved with the whole range of things we do. Our meetings for June and July are cancelled, but we hope to be back as soon as lockdown restrictions are lifted.

Fiona Steward

Congratulations on putting together such an interesting magazine in spite of the cancellation of all meetings etc. I do hope you can persuade more people to come forward with stories and items of news to give us something other than virus to read about whilst the present restrictions are keeping us all apart. Best wishes, B.M.G.

Hedgehogs

When we lived at Cold Blow Farm, we didn't see a hedgehog. I suppose there were too many foxes and badgers; but since moving to Wye 14 years ago, we are so lucky to see them.

Our garden is mostly shrubs and herbaceous plants to hide in. There are two hedgehog houses hidden under the shrubs and both have been used.

It is great fun at night watching them come out and run across the lawn to the patio to feed. When it was darker evenings, they came out earlier; but now, with the lighter evenings, it is about 9 -10 before they emerge. They are out all night and I hear the dishes rattling sometimes: a hint there is no food, so I get up and put more out.

Last October a mum brought a tiny baby to feed and a night or two later there were two in the saucers eating, but no mum.



They came each night for food and when the weather got colder, I managed to catch them and put them in the conservatory. I put one of the hedgehog houses inside a large box in there, and they seemed quite happy, with food and water on tap. We only saw them occasionally. But, soon after, they climbed out of the box (didn't know they could climb!), ventured into the lounge and left droppings. So then I shut the conservatory door, but they still climbed and got onto the conservatory windowsills and knocked down plants!

So, after that, they were put into the greenhouse with their

hedgehog house filled with straw and dried leaves, where they stayed for the winter. We didn't see much of them but they still came out for food and water.

We let them out when it got warmer and they still come for food every night. The most we have seen together at one time is five. Michael sits in the conservatory watching them instead of the TV!

JB

‘So they do Say.!

Buttons were first introduced in about 1330. Only the elderly or the obese refused to use them.

Shoes were commonly made without distinction between left and right; though, gradually, cordwainers (who made the best shoes from Cordovan leather) began to distinguish between left and right.

Food prices in 1363: a hen 4d; pheasant 2d; best loin of beef 5d; best leg of pork 3d; suckling pig 8d.

Illness in the 14th century, according to the opinion of most people, was divine judgement.

Hospitals often placed seriously-ill patients in one bed together. Germ theory and circulation theory were unknown.

If someone seemed in a comatose state, no-one would check their pulse. Instead, they would place a bowl of water on their chest to see if they were still breathing.

Theories about disease were bound up with astrology. When the King of France asked the medical faculty of the University of Paris to explain the causes of the Great Plague of 1348, they replied, "...an important conjunction of the three higher planets which, with other conjunctions and eclipses, is the cause of the pernicious corruption of the air.....the conjunction of Mars and Jupiter causes great pestilence in the air".

TW

The Mystery of the Stone Slab at St Mary's

An article in May's magazine referred to a large stone situated at the south door of this church at Hastingleigh, and wondered about its origin.

It is possible that it came from the coppice woods northeast of the village hall.

The manor of Barton of Canterbury owned the land around Evington Place where the Honywood family lived. They also owned the land on both sides of the road to the pond at Hastingleigh. They called this area Evington Leeze.

There is a reference to a "very large stone" in a map of Evington Leeze, which has been seen and notes taken of it. At the bottom it says: "Measured and plotted by Tho Hill sworne surveyor. 1686". On the north side of the road going through the Leeze there are places identified by the surveyor as being worthy of mention.

One reads, "At B. lyeth above ground a very great and large stone about 10 or 12 tun weight, and one corner is cut round with a gutter as tho sometime a chaine hath been there fastened but for what purpose I cannot learne, nor how it came there, nor no likelyhode of its place there to be natural, for thereabouts is no stone neither great nor small of yt nature no neerer than Hythe or Saltwood.". Place B is within today's coppice wood on the north side of the road at the junction of the road and the track leading to the Malt House. If it is not there now then perhaps this is the stone that was moved to the church. It certainly meets the criteria in the article, being large and not of local material.

Another reads, "At D. is to be seen certaine Banks and Holes like unto Harbours or Caves, in the time of Ware, for in old time was their way in chalkie or fast ground where their camps lay to make themselves Caves and Arches to lye under to save them from ye fall

of arrows. And this might be in the dayes of the Danes, for not far from hence is a place which taketh its name from ye living of Dane called Living Dane." Place D is also within today's coppice wood. After the track passes by the Malt House, D is about 100 yards south into the woods. It is shown on the map as several lines of marks like an upside down capital V.

The pond at Hastingleigh on the map was called as Haimers Soale – sole being a Kentish name for a watering place.

Source: The manor of Barton records at Canterbury Cathedral Archives – CCA CC/P/1/A/1

This article contains words as they were actually written in 1686 and people will make their own interpretations as to the meaning of the words.

History Enthusiast

Ultrafast Fibre Broadband

Great news! Following an overwhelming response, Openreach has confirmed that it now has enough registrations from residents and businesses in our area to start building the infrastructure to bring ultrafast fibre broadband to homes and businesses that were included in the Hastingleigh Project.

Openreach will be using vouchers provided by the Government and Kent County Council to pay for the project in its entirety. Those vouchers will be issued according to the addresses which have registered for the project.

Over the next few weeks, all those who registered on the Openreach website will receive an email from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The DCMS will ask you to confirm that you are happy for your voucher to be included in the scheme.

While there is no timescale for the work to be completed, it is anticipated that it will be up and running within 12 months.

Kind regards

HANND Group

A Visit to Evington Place, March 1863

Looking through papers given to me over the years, I came across the programme for two plays being performed at Evington Place, the home of Sir Courtenay Honywood. My imagination, and some facts from a newspaper cutting at that time, have allowed me to revisit that week in 1863 when the 'Big House' (demolished in 1938) was the centre for a house party. Who was there? What did they do? Who was serving them?



Evington Place was a large house with a central hall leading to a drawing room, library, dining room and boudoir; and on the first floor, four principal bedrooms, dressing-rooms and a bathroom; plus two more bedrooms, a large billiard room and night nursery (very necessary as there were four children under six in 1863). Above that were four more bedrooms for guests, and five servant bedrooms. There were about sixteen servants looking after the family and house

guests at this time: a valet, footmen, ladies' maids, laundry maid, and kitchen maids.

On the Monday of that week in March 1863, twenty three of Sir Courtenay and Lady Honywood's relatives (including William Honywood MP, Colonel of Berkshire Regiment; Louise Honywood, one of Sir Courtenay's sisters; Robert Honywood, and a cousin who came from the Honywood Markshall estate in Essex) and friends, many with army connections (particularly the East Kent Yeomenry), arrived to stay.

The plays that they obviously rehearsed and then performed were written by John Maddison Morton Esq., a notable Victorian playwright especially of farces and comedies - the sort of thing Queen Victoria and Prince Albert would have enjoyed watching in Windsor. The comedy 'Wooing One's Wife' was followed by the farce 'Tom Noddy's Secret', and extra parts were provided by the Band of Brothers. The Band of Brothers (The BB) were formed in 1858 by Sir Courtenay as a cricket team, comprising mostly officers of the East Kent Yeomenry; and they played when they could get together against another team, like the Torry Hill team. The cricket ground was to the north of the road/track down to Evington on the only flattish piece of ground. I wonder if the wellingtonia tree still standing on the north side was on the boundary? The BB still exists and is part of the Old Stagers, who perform a play during the Canterbury Cricket Week.

On the Wednesday evening, the performance was given to Sir Honywood's yeomanry troop and his tenants, followed by a sumptuous feast and dancing until almost the break of day. We can imagine the tenants of the many farms that stretched all the way to Petham coming with their carts or carriages: from Mill House Farm, Pett Bottom and Little Pett Bottom farms; from Upper Maxted and Maxted Street Farms; from Elmsted Court Lodge Farm, Lower and Upper Hill Street Farms, Bodsham Farm, Great and Little Holt farms, Dean Farm, Great Dowles; from Ittinge, Podlinge and Bavinge farms; and from Sheepcourt, Ashenfield, Grandacre and Parish farms. Everyone coming to enjoy the hospitality of the Big House: about 40 people in all.

Again, on the Thursday, the house was crammed from "pit to

stalls" (I imagine in the large lofty drawing room) with other smart friends, including the local vicar, the Reverend Prideaux and the Reverend and Mrs Hallett; Captain Byrne and the officers of the Canterbury garrison; officers of the Dover and Shorncliffe garrison; and a family name we still know in East Kent, M.H. Denne Esq and Miss Denne. Again, there was feasting and dancing, and one imagines gambling and billiard playing, too.

Amongst other entertainments that week for the House guests were a pigeon-shooting match, and a 'draghunt' on the Friday; and of course there was the garden and lovely parkland of 160 acres around the house to wander in.

As one drives down the hill from Hastingleigh, look over to your right and you can see what's left of the house, the cellars and footman's room with sycamore sprouting and cattle grazing peacefully ... long gone the players, party goers and sumptuous feasting.

RB

Wanted

Following on from the articles about hedgehogs and foxes, we would love to see some photos of your garden visitors to publish in colour in next months magazine.

Please email photos to
elmstedwithhastingleighnews@yahoo.co.uk



Club

The ECP will hold all the outstanding draws once the isolation period has finished and the community can once again meet at the hall for a coffee and a chat.

Water Events

The article on nailbournes in the last issue brought back memories. To add to the writer's comments on the winter of 2000/2001, there are photos taken around Elmsted that showed the slow progress of the nailbourne from Petham to Duckpit Lane, across Dean Farm's field, across the road to Ittinge, across the road to Great Holt Farm, through Holt Valley to the Telephone exchange. One photo taken from the top of Dean Hill shows the stream from Duckpit lane through the valley to the telephone exchange. Another was of the huge lake around the telephone exchange. There was also a video made by someone of all the scenes along this nailbourne.

And who can forget the cricket field at Lyminge where the flood was nearly up to the gutters of the clubhouse there?

On aquifers, it is understood that the well at Kingsmill Down Farm at Hastingleigh is regularly monitored by the Environment Agency to ascertain the level there.

On another water related matter the book "The Water Supply Of Kent. With Records Of Sinkings And Borings" by William Whitaker, BA, FRS, has this item about Elmsted:

"Well in the garden at Elmsted Vicarage at Bodsham (Information from the Rev. G. A. Collett, in a paper by G. Dowker, Geologist Magazine 1887, p. 212). Shaft. 500 feet above Ordnance Datum. Water first reached at 180 feet. A good head at the bottom. The chalk was so hard that it had to be blasted. Joints were few and far between. Below 220 feet the chalk was more jointed and more easily worked. The water-level here is usually highest in May and then falls till January, when it rises again. In December, 1884, the well was dry and kept so till January 13th, 1885. The next morning there were 14 feet of water, which soon increased to 40."

And weren't the wells dug by itinerant workers? At intervals down the well, small recesses were dug out for resting places as they descended and ascended getting spoil up. And as they descended and dug further down, by their very nature, water would be seeping in. How did they know when to dig no further? Why weren't wells dug on lower ground to cut out some of the digging?

History Enthusiast



Tails from Wales



Part Two (still from Hastingleigh)

Moving from Hastingleigh to student halls on Holloway Road was a bit of a shock. I was living in a building with a larger population than Hastingleigh, had a crossroads with four lanes of traffic meeting six just outside my window and rock music blaring from the bar below my room at 3am. I was in a flat with five other RVC students, three others doing veterinary medicine and two on the bioveterinary science course.

The five-year veterinary medicine course at the RVC is split into two preclinical years based at the Camden campus, London, followed by three clinical years at the Hawkshead campus near Potters Bar, Hertfordshire. The first term of the first year was an introduction, getting everyone up to the same level, with one week of lectures spent on each body system. Over the next five terms these body systems were revisited in more depth with some other topics, such as parasitology and pharmacology, along the way. During our 'holidays' in the first two years, we had to do 12 weeks of animal-handling extra mural studies (AHEMS). This involved two weeks on a dairy farm, pig farm, lambing, and working with horses, which were compulsory; leaving four weeks free to do what we wanted (with the agreement of the university) which, for me, involved a week on a turkey farm, an extra two weeks lambing and another week with horses.

With second year exams passed, it was time to move to Hertfordshire for the final three years. Living in London for two years was more than enough for me, so moving to a (large) village was quite a relief. I had four new housemates all on the veterinary medicine course although one was a year behind the rest of us.

The third year and half of the fourth year follow a similar structure to the first two years, working back through the same body systems, but this time with an emphasis on the unhealthy animal. These years became more practical after the first two, being quite theory-based, as we spent more time with the animals at the university farm, were taught how to suture and other clinical skills on models and had the opportunity to go into the university equine and small animal hospitals and practiced communication skills with actors. During the breaks in the final three years we had to complete 26 weeks of clinical EMS with vets, which I did at local practices

and a week on the Isles of Scilly with vet Heike (for any who remembers the BBC series An Island Parish). This was both a holiday and a very different experience to anything I had come across around here.

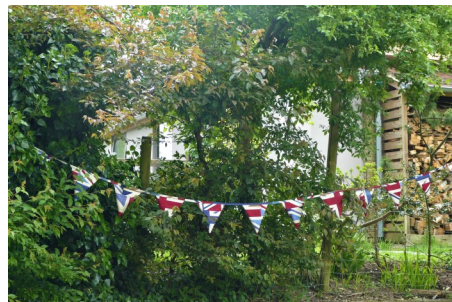
Our fourth year exams were in December, one part of these was an exam where we started working on two cases on a Friday then had blood results and other new information released over the weekend to work on before going back on Monday to answer further questions based on the new information we had. This was followed by rotations, the final stage of vet school, a series of one or two week placements with the various departments in the university small animal hospitals, equine hospital and first opinion service, and farm practices in Dorset and Hampshire. These were done in groups with four or five other students and another group for the longer placements. Some were compulsory, core, rotations and some we could choose for ourselves: track rotations. As cases came in we divided them amongst ourselves, and the student who took on the case had to follow it through its treatment and discuss the case with the senior clinicians. Core rotations finished for me in February of fifth year with equine out of hours and so I only had emergency and critical care and cardiology track rotations before my final exams started.

The first of the final exams was a practical exam, a series of 5-minute stations in which we were tested on communication skills, bandaging, suturing, anaesthetics, removing horse shoes and much more. Five minutes is not a long time and feels even less with the pressure. On the bandaging station I juggled then dropped a roll of bandage while holding on to one end and watched as it rolled away from me and had to roll it back up again and on another station I dropped a syringe and had to move a bin out from under the table to find it. We then had electives, three final weeks of lectures covering a range of topics. Most people had decided on their field of veterinary medicine by this point, many had jobs lined up already, so chose to go to the lectures relevant to their chosen career path and ones which might be useful for the upcoming exams. Our final exams took place over two days, answering two questions each day on clinical cases, one equine, small animal or farm, and one of our choice. Each question would involve an animal or group of animals with a problem, and a series of questions testing our knowledge of further workups, possible treatments and discussing ethical problems associated with the case.

Exams were finally done, results were released and graduation followed. I now had to find a job.

RJB

Celebrating VE75







Covid-19 Thanks

We would like to run a feature to say thank you to the various frontline workers who have seen us/are seeing us (!!) through the Covid-19 pandemic. If you have been personally affected by the lockdown, or represent a local body, please send your Thank You message to us at: elmstedwithhastingleighnews@yahoo.co.uk.

In The Garden

Since writing my last missive we have had only about one day's rain: enough to fill our water holding tanks which had, amazingly, not actually run out. These tanks are both underground (dating from circa 1740, and holding some 500 gallons or 2250 litres) and surface tanks (dating from circa 2000, and holding about 600 gallons or 2725 litres) – all filled from roofs. But since then, apart from a spit or two, there has been no rain, so the wellington boots and sou'wester remain unused.

And then we had a cold spell for a week, just as things were getting going in the garden. So horticultural fleeces to the fore! Large flower pots were placed over spuds and tender flower seedlings to try and protect them from frosts which, when they came, were not serious. Fleece is good, at about 30g per square metre. I sometimes plant out module-grown vegetables straight from the greenhouse without hardening them off, and lay fleece on top, touching the plants, with a few bricks to hold the fleece in place. Warmth from the soil in Spring helps keep the seedlings going, and light and some rain can percolate through. I remove the fleece after a few days, though small plants are quite tolerant of the slight weight on their leaves. Cosmos and Echium were just ready to plant out when the cold week arrived, so we found them space under glass. They keep on growing there, so they must be planted out quickly now, and the Cosmos staked in this windy hill countryside.

Hooray! After two frustrating years failing to get parsnips to germinate (even though sown several times), I now have four short rows, with almost every seed up and growing. I use new seed every year, of course: parsnip is renowned for not holding its germinating power year-on-year and, for that matter, I get new carrot seed each year, too. Both these plants do not take kindly to being transplanted, so they need to be sown directly where they will grow to maturity. Four rows of early carrot desperately need thinning as soon as I've finished writing this: two of Nantes 2 (good flavour) and two of

Touchon (an old French variety I have not grown before). Actually, I shan't be on my knees for long as my 'rows' are only 1.2 meters long, across a bed. All the vegetables and some fruit are grown on this bed system, with paved 45cm paths between. This layout saves a lot of work and you hardly have to walk on the beds at all.

Flowers and vegetables that have got going with their roots down are OK in this dry spell, but the young apple trees (Christmas Pippin, Sunset and the Crab Apple Evereste) - all too young to fruit yet - are getting a 10 litre can of water every week, which helps them to establish their root system in their first year.

June is the month of flowers of so many descriptions! Roses, of course, are everyone's favourite (and were you able to mulch them generously in the Spring?). Clematis cascading over trellises, an old shed or even another tree. Irises, delphiniums, campanulas, geraniums and lupins. Dead-heading can be an enjoyable light task on a warm evening, and will help prolong the flowering period.

This is a good time to sow (for next year) hardy biennials and herbaceous perennials such as Sweet William. If sowing them now, prepare a seed bed (preferably not in full sun) and work into a fine tilth. Then press down firmly and leave them to settle for a day or two, watering with a fine rose if somewhat dry. They may need watering again as you sow. Within a short time – a few weeks if you keep the weeds at bay – seedlings should have grown large enough to handle, thin out or transplant into pots to grow on.

Successional salad crops will need sowing: lettuce, radish and salad onions (these latter I start in module trays under glass, several to a module, and then plant in clumps). Another possibility with lettuce is to sow the Batavian type, such as Kamalia, and then plant these out at about 24cm apart in a square block. Just before the leaves begin to touch, you can start picking the outer leaves for your salad bowl. You will be surprised at how many weeks these plants will cheerfully provide you with a steady succession of leaves, saving much resowing!



Fred

Stick-and-Flick!



With the Covid-19 lockdown in place as I write, and with the approach of Summer, I thought it might be time to mention dog poo.

It seems to me that more and more people are discovering the joys of walking, particularly families with children who need to be entertained and exercised. So, for the sake of parents and children, may I ask that dog-walkers pay particular attention to their dog's actions, and remove mess straightaway from the many footpaths that criss-cross our village and surrounding areas?

I find the easiest method of dealing with my dog's performance, is to use a stick and flick the offending article well off the path, making sure I throw the stick far away afterwards (I don't want anyone picking it up by the wrong end later!). Alternatively, I gather up a barrier of soil or leaves between the poo and my boot, and shoot the mess off the path with a flick of my toe. Using either of these methods is free, it keeps the paths clear, I don't have to carry anything, and it puts the mess where it can be broken down safely by numerous microbes and invertebrates - turning it into food to support the food chain, instead of something nasty to be scraped off someone's shoe.

We have all seen those black bags hanging off bushes, or tucked away in hedgerows, and it puzzles me as to why they are left there. Sadly, there is no Poo Fairy, so I wonder if anyone knows who the owners think is going to remove these bags? So I don't use a 'doggie poop bag' unless I plan to take it home with me. In a bag, the poo takes longer to be broken down and rendered harmless, because the bag has to decompose first...and this can take months! Why preserve the hazard, when a quick flick can resolve the issue?

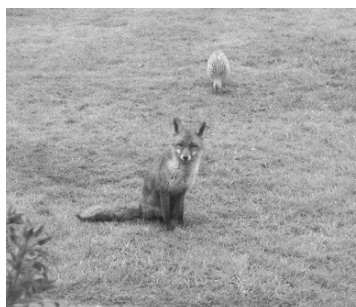
I've also noticed that some people use plastic bags for clearing up messes. The wrapping may say that the bags are biodegradable, but they only decompose to the tiniest particles of plastic - which ultimately enter the food chain or pollute our environment. You can

get bags made of vegetable matter, which break down into natural particles and are not as harmful to the environment. There are more and more examples available through pet shops and supermarkets, or online. 'Adios Plastic' and 'Beco Bags' are two such brands.

In fact, the fewer bags we use overall, the better. So please 'stick-and-flick' or 'boot-and-shoot'. The only times I ALWAYS use a bag is if my dog chooses to relieve themselves in someone's garden, in a playing field, or in a meadow where cattle graze. Dog faeces can be the cause of Neosporosis in cattle, where cows and sheep abort owing to picking up parasites from the poo. Humans can catch all sorts of infections and diseases from dog poo, so I always try and ensure my dog's work is safely out of the way.

So, as Summer approaches and we all enjoy the wonderful countryside we live in, I ask all dog-owners to spare a thought for the care-free rambler, the stressed parent and the oblivious child, and keep our pathways clear of dog mess. All it takes is a flick. SF

Our Daily Visitor



Mrs Fox has been visiting us for about 5 years. She comes at the same time each day for her dinner. The photos above show her ignoring both pheasants (she sometimes walks through a group of them while feeding) and Angel cat. She once brought her three youngsters to visit us, too.

Pro bono publico

Coping with Lockdown

It's ok to not be ok

Whilst it's true that we are all in this together, the impact of COVID-19 and the negative effects of the lockdown are not necessarily averaged across the population.

Different people in different circumstances are going to experience the lockdown in different ways. Access to private outdoor space, the sector in which you are employed, who you live with and many other factors are starting to emerge as indicators as to whether people were able to cope positively with the lockdown.

It's good to remember that there isn't a right or wrong way to cope in these difficult times; it is an emotional roller-coaster with the associated ups and downs and sharp turns from positivity to negativity.

Remember, this is normal in abnormal times.

There are some recognised situations that are strong triggers for worry and anxiety. These are situations, which are:

- **Ambiguous** – open to different interpretations.
- **Novel and new** – so we don't have experience to fall back on.
- **Unpredictable** – It's unclear how things will turn out.

Sound familiar?

If you are struggling with worry and anxiety during this time there are some simple strategies that may help. Only a few are included here but you can use the email at the end of the article if you would like further information.

- **Recognise worry triggers.** During the pandemic it can feel like we need to constantly look for updates and information. But is this a trigger that makes us feel more anxious? If you are experiencing worry or anxiety it can be a good idea to think about things that may be triggering it. Do you feel anxious after watching the news or

reading statuses on social media? It can be helpful to be mindful of what may cause us worry and anxiety, and try to limit this if possible.

- **Helpful and Unhelpful Worries.** Can we control what we are worried about? It can be helpful to think about worries in terms of 'Real World' and 'Hypothetical'. Real world worries are things like 'Have I got enough food in the house for this week?' and usually we can do something about them and have some control.

Hypothetical worries are things like 'I really hope I don't lose my job next year' and realistically we can't control them. Trying to focus on worries we can control can be helpful.

- **Information and News.** There is a lot of fake and unhelpful information around at the moment which can just make things worse. Try and think about where you are accessing information, fact check it, if you need to, and try to choose reputable sources.

Take care and stay safe and well. If you would like any further details on anything in this article please email - mail@thetrainingeffect.co.uk

MB

Temporary Road Closure Wye Road, Hastingsleigh - 2-4 June 2020

It will be necessary to close part of Wye Road, Hastingsleigh, Ashford, currently planned from Tuesday 2 June 2020 with estimated completion 4 June 2020.

Wye Road (shown on some maps as Coldharbour Lane) will be closed west of Cow Lees / Staple Lees to the actual extent indicated on site.

The alternative route for through traffic is via Amage Road, Brabourne Road, Pilgrims Way, New Barn Hill, New Barn Road and The Street (Hastingsleigh) back to Wye Road

Local access to the remainder of Wye Road continues from either direction up to where the road is actually closed.

The closure is to allow permanent reinstatement works to be carried out following earlier water excavations, being carried out by Clancy Docwra working with South East Water.

Due to the nature of these works, it will not be possible to re-open the road outside the working hours.

Farming Notebook

May is always a spectacular month.

The farm is a patchwork of colour: trees and hedgerows are resplendent in the verdant green of their new leaves; the yellow of oilseed rape in full flower; the rich brown of the newly-tilled soils of the potato fields; the wheat crops, a dark green as a contrast to the lighter hues of the pastures and newly-emerging spring beans. Beautiful.

We have finished potato planting after a slight delay. About to complete the job ahead of a forecast wet weekend, we spotted that one of the bags of input seed that had come direct from the breeder was the wrong variety. It was supposed to be Melody, a white oval potato. The delivery note said Melody. The bag said Melody. The invoice was for Melody. But it most certainly was not Melody. It transpired that it was in fact another variety called Lady Rosetta. Thank goodness it was immediately spotted and none were planted. I spent a morning removing close to 60,000 tubers from the planter by hand. The seeds were “thirds” which means less than 35mm in diameter – very small, but a lot of them! The breeder immediately despatched some replacement Melody from Scotland, before making frantic phone calls to find out which customer had a rogue bag of Melody in their Lady Rosetta!

The very welcome rain arrived at the same time as the seed delivery. It was nearly a week before planting was completed.

It is the first time in over 30 years of growing seed potatoes that we have had this sort of mix-up. We are now looking at what systems we can put in place to avoid the issue in future. For our seed production, we are now colour-coding our varieties, from input seed right through to the point of sale. The colour given to a variety appears on the planting map. At harvest time every box going into store will have two coloured labels on which will be the year of harvest, variety and the field from which the crop came. Potatoes being graded for final dispatch will have a coloured label inserted into the clear plastic pocket of each 1.25tonne bag. It is quite common that we will have to grade several varieties for dispatch on the same day. The coloured labels will make it much easier to differentiate varieties from the seat of the forklift and thus, hopefully, avoid mistakes from our end.

Calving, too, has almost come to an end with the added bonus that one of the last cows to calve had twins! She had looked ready to calve for days, but nothing happened. Surely it must be soon... Eventually there were signs that calving had begun. So, after a couple of hours we got her into a pen for a quick check up. Sure enough, there were two front feet and a nose. We decided, as the cow was penned and calving was imminent, to assist the delivery. It was a very easy calving and our help was not really needed. A fine bull calf. The mother was very maternal but seemed unusually agitated. We decided to leave her with her new born so that the mum could settle, lick the calf clean and bond with her baby. Returning later to check that the calf had fed and all was well, we were very surprised to see the cow with TWO calves. Both calves were warm, dry and had full tummies. The cow was munching on some hay.

The sprayer has been busy over recent weeks. It is a key time to keep the rapidly-growing crops clear of disease and pests, as well as applying growth regulators. The latter, applied to the wheat crops, helps to shorten and stiffen the stems of the plant so that they can bear the weight of the ear when it ripens. This will help keep the crop standing and thus ease harvest and maintain quality.

The biggest pest at the moment is the pea and bean weevil. This tiny insect leaves characteristic notches around the leaves of the newly-emerged bean plants. As the adults munch the leaves and lay their eggs, the larvae burrow down into the roots and cause further havoc. The combination can be devastating if left unchecked.

Despite the warm sunny days, mid- May is deadline day. Not only do I have to have this article finished and with the editor by the 14th of the month, but I must also complete my BPS application to the Rural Payments Agency by the same day. The form is on line and pre-populated with all my fields. In theory all I have to do is change the cropping codes to correspond with what is growing in each field. In practice, I have to check every single entry to ensure that each field has the correct area, correct map reference, parcel number and hedges in linear metres. The latter took me days to correct last year, and this year has taken almost as long because some of the information is missing or wrong. I do wonder if a gremlin from Mars is responsible for the errors! Or perhaps it is the 5G mobile network to blame... Happily, it has now

been submitted and I have a certified paper record that confirms the information that I have entered. All I have left to do now is submit my application to DEFRA Plant Health to register my seed potato crops for 2020. This, too, is done on line and should be very straightforward: variety, grade, field generation, field, area, plant population, and drill-width of our crop. Variety, stock number, grade, field generation, and country of origin of the parent stock. Simple... No, not simple! One of the fields, is missing off the DEFRA records, and I cannot enter the crops. They are looking in to it!

Despite all the restrictions, we found ways to join in the VE Day celebrations. The sprayer is still looking very colourful, decked in bunting. Also, Thursday night will have us outside ringing our Swiss cowbells as thanks to all the carers in our community – clapping does not make enough noise at the end of our lane...

Take care, stay safe and let's hope the beauty of our surroundings helps to lift our spirits.

W Wilson-Haffenden



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