

VILLAGE DIARY

September	
5th 2:30 pm	Footpaths Group Walk starting at the Village Hall
7th 7.30pm	Parish Council meeting followed by and Planning Committee Meeting in the Village Hall
9th 2pm	W.I. meeting in the Village Hall.
14th 10 am	Footpaths Group Walk starting at the Village Hall
19th 12-2 pm	Wateringbury Community Market in the village car park
19th 2-5pm	Strawberry Tea Party at Manor Farm, Old Road, Wateringbury

WATERINGBURY COMMUNITY MARKET

Sunday 19th Sept. 12 – 2pm in village car park

Come to meet and buy local food products from the local producers, including: Teston Bakery, Fruit & Veg Stall, Roughway Farm, Cat's Preserves & Fudge, Bee Fleur fresh flowers, Red Hill Estate Wines, Sheena & Gordon's Jams & Chutneys, Free Range Pork products, Malling Roast (Coffees) and Ice Cream Van.

Buying local produce reduces the food miles and helps the environment.

Strawberry Tea Party on Sunday 19th September at Manor Farm, Old Road, (2pm – 5pm).

FREE ENTRY.

Enjoy award winning Hugh Lowe Farms strawberries and cream, a glass or two of Pimm's and some coffee and cake in the wonderful Manor Farm gardens. Bring a chair and picnic blanket and catch-up with friends. The afternoon will include a children and adults rounders match, the World Famous egg-catching competition, a raffle and various stalls.

All proceeds go to Friends of Wateringbury Church (FOWC).

DEFIBRILLATORS

If you follow football you will be aware that in the recent Euro 2021 match a Danish footballer suffered a cardiac arrest on the field and was brought back to life by being resuscitated with the use of a defibrillator.

Just to remind you, we have 4 defibrillators within a mile:

- Wateringbury Village Hall (outside main entrance)
- Wateringbury Surgery (Inside - opening hours only)
- Nettlestead Village Hall (outside main entrance)
- Teston Village Shop (outside entrance)

If you should be unfortunate and be present when a cardiac arrest occurs, take the following steps:

- 1) Dial 999 for medical help.
- 2) Commence CPR
- 3) If help is available, access your nearest defibrillator.

VILLAGE PEOPLE

Please let us have your news and tributes by 17 September for our October magazine. Entries are free. Email www.rostrum2@hotmail.com or phone 01622 812566

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to **Penny O'Flannagan**, the former postmistress of the Watlington Post office, who will celebrate a significant birthday this month.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND CONGRATULATIONS to **Yvonne Marks** who has a double celebration this month; a significant birthday and also hers and her husband, **David's**, Wedding Anniversary on 22nd September.

CONGRATULATIONS to **James Hall**, a former pupil of Watlington Primary School, on his great achievements in Artistic Gymnastics in his Olympic debut in Tokyo 20 Games.

FAREWELL to the **Vyas family**, owners of The Handy Store

We will be sorry to part with Benny, Rupal and their family who, since 2005, have been running the convenience grocery and newsagents store in Watlington. The shop was very well stocked, open 'all hours' and provided an exemplary newspaper delivery service. Its importance became apparent particularly during the pandemic lockdowns when they supported customers who were 'shielding'.

Our sincere thanks to Rupal, Benny and their family for providing an essential service to the community, always helpful and very polite and also for their support and contribution to the village life. On behalf of the village, we wish them lots of luck in the future.

THE HANDY STORE

After sixteen years of running The Handy Store, we have decided to step down and move to Crawley. Getting up at 4am every day to sort the newspapers and closing most days at 8pm for sixteen years has taken its toll and we are seeking a less demanding way of life.

We are pleased to report that we have found a very pleasant couple, Mr and Mrs Dave, to take over the shop. The changeover will occur on 29th August 2021 after our normal Sunday trading hours. The new management will operate along the same lines as we did and we can foresee no initial changes.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support, friendship and custom over the years and hope you will continue to offer the same support to Mr and Mrs Dave. Kind regards
Benny, Rupal, Dhruv and Manav.

GARDENING FOR WILDLIFE

Earlier this summer, I took part in the nationwide 'Butterfly Count'. It was a rather disheartening experience as I only spotted a few Large Whites on the day. Today however, in mid-August, my Buddleia is covered with; Peacock, Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral and Comma butterflies. I think that they chose the wrong month!

At this time of year, butterflies are also attracted to; Asters, Verbena, Sedum and flowering Ivy and these plants also attract bees and other insects.

If you did leave an area of your lawn to grow long, then now is the time to cut it if you haven't done so already. Cut as short as possible and then leave the cuttings to dry out and allow for any wildflower seeds to drop. A few days later they can

be raked up and added to the compost heap. If your grass is very strong then, having scarified, you could try sowing Yellow Rattle seed. This is a partial parasite that weakens the grass and allows the wild flowers to come through. It is also a pretty flower in its own right.

Following one of the wettest summers that I can remember, it won't be long now until the Swallows and Swifts leave us for another year.

Let's hope for an Indian summer! Pauline Knutton

NETTLESTEAD AND WATERINGBURY PRESCHOOL (NWPS) AND OUT OF SCHOOLS' CLUB (Graded as Outstanding by Ofsted)

Pirates are always a favourite topic and children are encouraged to get involved by dressing up or bringing in related items. Thank you to all our children who dress up but special thanks to Alexa's Daddy, for dressing up as a Pirate to bring her to school.

We went ahead with our International Mud Day again this year. Children enjoyed activities such as diggers in mud, safari animals in mud, painting with mud, mud handprints, mud pies, mud target practice, mud faces, pampering dolls with mud facemasks and a mud slide at the end of the day!

We were so pleased to be able to go ahead with the end of year's sports day, party and leavers' ceremony this year, supported by family and friends. The committee provided refreshments and our wonderful parents provided food for the party.

The children enjoyed taking part in sports day activities. Parents joined in with races and stayed on into the afternoon to see their children enjoy the party with paddling pools, Pinatas and bouncy castle.

If you are interested in any of the services the setting offers, please do not hesitate to contact us.
Childcare, Education and Out of School Clubs, including holiday club. 01622 813120,
enquiries@nwps.org.uk , <https://nwpreschool.org.uk/>

WATERINGBURY FLOWER CLUB

Welcome back after the summer break. Our club has had an interesting one with member visits to several local gardens, culminating in a final visit to The Himalayan Gardens near Sevenoaks. With restrictions changing all the time, so far, it has been difficult to arrange this year's programme with lots of Zoom meetings and demonstrations.

Our usual hall is open again with Covid-19 guidelines in place, including social distancing. However, some members are still a bit hesitant about face to face meetings.

We are hoping to have a Zoom demonstration very soon. Please check our website for updates:
www.wateringburyflowerclub.co.uk
Jean Schofield WFC

WATERINGBURY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

The W.I. were very pleased to hold their delayed A.G.M. in the Village Hall in August.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 9th September at 2:00pm in the Village Hall. The speaker will be Alison Cable from Rochester Bridge Trust. She will talk about the bridges of the River Medway to include those at Teston and Wateringbury. Margaret Malsher

TESTON AND WATERINGBURY PRE-SCHOOL

Welcome back to all our children and families to what will be a very exciting start to the new academic year. This term we will be exploring the book 'Whatever Next!' by Jill Murphy. This book explores imaginative adventure. Baby Bear is determined to fit in a trip to the moon before bath time. Can he do it?

Children will develop their imagination whilst exploring the stars and the moon. They will learn about friendship and how to pack a healthy picnic. We will explore the sound of rain along with things that may or may not withstand getting wet, as it starts raining on Baby Bear's adventure.

In our craft activities we will be making our own rockets to help us fly to different planets and making a healthy picnic to take with them.

If you are interested in joining our pre-school, please contact

Tina Driver on 07805 796353 or email on tandwngroup@gmail.com

WATERINGBURY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

We had hoped that by September the lockdown restrictions would have been relaxed sufficiently for us to resume our monthly programme of talks. The Village Hall has now re-opened for activities subject to perfectly reasonable Covid requirements.

The Committee, small in number as we are, would have difficulty dealing with these requirements. We have therefore decided to defer re-starting of our talks until circumstances are less restrictive. We will keep you informed. David Barrow

FIRST WATERINGBURY GUIDES

In my last report I said that we were canoeing on the Medway and sailing at Mote Park, both subject to the weather. Well, this is Britain, and of course the canoeing was cancelled because of thunder storms leading to the river being high and fast flowing. The sailing was also cancelled but because there was no wind! The instructor offered the girls sailing but with paddles which they turned down in favour of paddle boarding. They chose to take to the water in twos and threes on each paddle board and of course it wasn't long before they were falling in. By the end of the session all 11 girls had fallen in the lake multiple times. However, the verdict was that they had thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

We finished the term with another wide game, go karts and climbing at Lower Grange Farm and Dino Golf. Even this ancient leader (in the girls' eyes) had a go at the climbing and I'm proud and relieved to say that I did reach the top of the tower. The mini Olympics had to be cancelled to make way for the rearranged canoeing trip so we'll hold that over until next term.

We're well on our way with planning the new term and most of the activities are booked. We're hoping to do many of our meetings outdoors but we will also, finally, and subject to no further restrictions, get back into the HQ. We have guides who have been with us for 18 months who have no idea what the HQ looks like inside.

Sadly, our oldest guides have decided that it's time for them to move on and we wish them well and will miss them.

They have all promised to come back and visit and there is always the chance for them to return as young leaders to enjoy the fun again. When we start back, we will be full and have a long waiting list and with Emily going on maternity leave shortly, I really need some help, be it on a temporary basis or longer term. Do please call me on 01622 815416 or email to sheenastewartx3@gmail.com. What have you got to lose?

If your daughter is interested in joining brownies or rainbows, please register her on the Girlguiding website and you will be contacted to arrange a visit. Rainbows are aged from 5-7, brownies 7-10 and guides 10-14.
Sheena, Emily and Hayleigh 1st Wateringbury Guides

Volunteer with Compaid charity to make a difference

Compaid, based in Paddock Wood, are looking for experienced drivers to join their transport team, supporting disabled people by driving small minibuses of up to 14 seats, or smaller wheelchair adapted vehicles. For further details please contact Judith Williams, t: 01892 834539 e: judith.williams@compaid.org.uk website: www.compaid.org.uk

WATERINGBURY FOOTPATH GROUP

In July and August we had a few group walks starting and ending at the Village Hall. One route went to the west of the village and some of us were rewarded with a view of a magnificent stag showing off his antlers while silhouetted on the skyline only about 100 yards away. On that walk, even those who missed the deer still had lovely distant views southwards of Hadlow Tower, the southern edges of Tonbridge and the Bidborough Ridge. Another route took us south of the village as far as Shingle Barn on Smiths Hill/Yalding Hill, where there is a welcome picnic bench and great views northwards of Wateringbury with Teston and Barming to the right and Mereworth to the left.

Walking in a group is an easy way to meet new people. You can chat to those around you while you walk, or you can simply let snippets of other peoples' conversations wash over you. We welcome new people and there is no pressure. If you text me I'll include you in group texts about where and when we are starting from. Each month I'm doing one route on a choice of days, one at the weekend and one during the week (some people come on both). You are welcome to phone me to find out more.

Our next walks will be on Sunday 5th September, leaving the Village Hall at 2:30pm and again on Tuesday 14th September, leaving at 10am. Lisa Dean 07759 539032

FROM OUR KCC & T&M COUNCILLOR SARAH HUDSON

TRAFFIC CALMING

Following extensive discussions with Kent Highways, I am really pleased that they have changed their minds, and will start a new process for the Traffic Regulation Order needed to reduce the speed limit on the A26 from the Pizien Well Road bend to the western edge of the village.

The bend will now become a mandatory 40mph, and this will be the speed from there to Manor Farm, where it reduces to 30mph. This is a far more sensible speed, rather than the 60mph dropping to 30mph. Additionally, there will be some other traffic calming measures, including a new pavement on the opposite side to the Church, which will change the splay of Mill Lane, making it safer to pull out, and the same with Old Road. There will be a new pavement on the left hand side providing a safety refuge for pedestrians crossing the road for the bus stops. Pavements also make the driver more wary of pedestrians, and makes the road feel narrower.

This is a brilliant first step in getting traffic speeds down through the village, but still more to do. I will keep my fingers crossed that we can achieve more, and quicker, than the 15 years I have been campaigning for this. Sarah Hudson

AN ACTIVE SUMMER WITH WATERINGBURY SCOUT GROUP

The Beavers have been orienteering, learnt fire safety and fire-lighting, competed in mini Olympics, built shelters and tested them against the rain! They also welcomed Jenny and Nick who were officially invested into Wateringbury Scout Group to take up the roles of Assistant Beaver Scout Leaders.

The Cubs have been using the summer term to recycle and cycle, but did the *Wet weather help or hinder?* They designed and built sailing boats out of recycled materials, ending with a regatta on a perfectly full stream. And cycling - oh, the mud! (But it just made their smiles wider!)

The Scouts have hiked and learnt how to use power tools. They were challenged to build the famous Wembley Towers and they didn't disappoint. They demonstrated good creativity, good engineering and, of course, good knots! If you are a Scout, hot weather and end of summer term means Water games: slippey, slidey, fun, fun, fun!

The Explorers enjoyed sports. Using bizarre and ingenious methods they tried to predict the outcome of a certain football match just before kick-off (a few were even accurate!) They constructed chariots to race and made and played DIY (very) crazy golf.

Twenty three intrepid explorers have finally been able to go ahead with Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, cheerfully excelling at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. And younger enthusiasts have gained badges for their uniforms in Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. Nice work, Scouting Superstars - aged 6 to 18, you make your leaders very proud.

And as I write this, the Scouts and Explorers are about to embark on Summer Camp. Yippee, camping again at last – we can't wait!
Hazel, Assistant Explorer Scout Leader

Paddock Wood Choral Society is planning to restart rehearsals on 7th September, and is looking for new members to join the choir. The rehearsals take place every Tuesday from 7:30 – 9:30 pm at St. Andrew's Church, Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood (no auditions needed!).

To find out more, please call 01892 833232, or email secretary@paddockwood-choral.org.uk
website www.paddockwood-choral.org.uk

Down the Memory Lane

Video footage taken by villagers at the Carnival in Nettlestead and Watringbury around the year 2000 has been digitally converted and is now available to anyone to view by using the following link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/13DMbLXKTTqN3oRbSOxV-69hf4Dkp_ta8/view?usp=sharing

Roger King e:
woodcnurs@aol.com

HOPS AND WATERINGBURY

September was the time for hop picking, an annual event lasting 2 to 3 weeks, which dominated life in Watringbury for 2 centuries. Mechanisation of picking in the late 1950s stopped the annual invasion of "hoppers" and hops later became unprofitable as a result of foreign competition. No hops are now grown in the village. But the physical remains are still here. The most prominent are the oast houses, where the hops were dried, now all repurposed. Less prominent and in reduced numbers are the old hoppers huts, which provided the hoppers with temporary shelter. It is also possible to still find hops growing wild in the local hedgerows.

Hops, which came to England in the 16th century, could be a very profitable crop for the farmers but there were the occasional bad years. They provided villagers some work throughout the year but, come the harvest in September, most people, including children, turned their hand to picking. Watringbury School organised holidays around the hopping season, which started at slightly different times each year.

In addition, literally thousands of hop pickers and their families came to Watringbury from London, from the mid-19th century, many by train. They hoped for a paid holiday in the fresh air with a change in the nature of the squalor in which they lived. It was the only holiday they could afford. The numbers of "foreigners" from London could be more than the village residents, and they created many problems from thefts, violence, drunkenness and disease. As well as cockneys from the East End, many came from Bermondsey and Rotherhithe. Roma (or *gypsies* as they were then called) were numerous and renowned for the frequent fights between different clans.

The village over time arranged for facilities for the hoppers, including a temporary hospital, a reading room, and coffee bars. Although the extra custom hoppers brought to pubs and shops was valuable, they were regarded by locals with suspicion and many boarded up their premises. Hoppers were only paid at the end of their work and special trains were laid on, leaving soon after payment to avoid excess drunkenness.

The vicar wrote in the parish magazine in the late 19th and early 20th centuries long reports each year on all aspects of hopping, including the missionary work which was undertaken among the hoppers. These reports can be found on Watringbury Local History Society's web-site.

The most famous hopper, *incognito* at the time, was George Orwell, who in September 1931 worked at Brewers Hall Farm, Mereworth for the largest Watringbury hop farmer, Frank Blest, of Canon Lane. He had walked most of the way from London with other tramps and left on the train from Watringbury station. His experiences provided him with background for his novel, *A Clergyman's Daughter*. His

published diary of his time here shows hopping from a picker's perspective, both its harshness but also its camaraderie.
Terry Bird

WATERINGBURY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Parish Council had no formal meetings during the summer months but the councillors continued their duties. Currently, the Council is working on the following issues:

- replacing all Parish owned street lights with LED lanterns
- removal and replacement of the swing scales in the play area
- Highways Improvement Plan to be submitted after a Road Safety Review has been completed
- redesigning and improvement to the PC website

The forthcoming Parish Council meetings, followed by Planning Committee meetings, will take place in the Village Hall on: **7th September at 7.30pm** and **5th October at 7.30pm**

Depending on the Covid situation, public numbers may be restricted due to the lack of sufficient room in the hall to allow for social distancing. For up to date information, please contact the Clerk on 01622 817068 or clerk@wateringburypc.org.uk

Village artists – Parish Council needs your help!

Parish Councillors have been working with the Parish Clerk to put more information about the village onto the upgraded Parish Council website. They would like to include a quirky village map for people to get an idea of the layout of the village and where the interesting places are. The sort of not-quite-to-scale hand drawn map with arrows pointing out places of local interest.

If you are able to help, please contact clerk@wateringburypc.org.uk

REV GARY WRITES

The Rectory, 72 The Street, Mereworth ME18 5NA
gary.rev@outlook.com ☎ 01622 813178

Strength and Weakness

It has been a great relief to lift the restrictions on services in the church and we have been enjoying especially the freedom to sing again. When the restrictions were lifted back in July, I and the members of the PCCs had to think about how we would manage the freedom allowed to us. We wanted to make sure that those people who would only feel safe coming to church with the restrictions still in place would feel comfortable to do so. So, we decided to create areas in the buildings where the rules about social distancing and mask wearing would still be observed. I'm pleased to say that this has been working well.

It's a principle laid down for followers of Jesus Christ that the strong and confident people in the church should defer to those who feel vulnerable and less confident (Romans chapter 14 is a good example of this) and to do so without grumbling or passing judgement. It's a self-denying approach to differences of opinion that is grounded in the attitude of Jesus Himself who humbled Himself for us even to the extent of giving up His life for us upon the cross (Philippians 2: 1 – 11).

But having said all of that I do think this pandemic serves as a reminder from God that we are all vulnerable; even the biggest, toughest, and healthiest are vulnerable. And I think one of the reasons Jesus said we must all become like little children if we are to enter God's Kingdom is that we need to see how vulnerable and dependent we all are. All the self-confidence, self-reliance, and personal striving to alleviate our dissatisfaction need to be surrendered before Jesus who became poor and weak for us, emptying Himself of all His power even to the extent of giving up His life for us on the cross.

I wonder what things are going on in your life at the moment that you could learn to see as God's way of saying "Stop; it's time to reflect on your need of me – you're not as strong as you think you are"?

Revd. Gary Townsend.

NEW HEADTEACHER JOINS WATERINGBURY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wateringbury CE Primary School begins a new and exciting chapter this term with the appointment of a new headteacher. Debbie Johnson will take up her position at the Bow Road school at the start of the new academic year in September. Miss Johnson was previously the Interim Headteacher at Ditton Junior CE Primary School and Deputy Headteacher at Pembury Primary School.

She said: "I am thrilled to be joining Wateringbury CE Primary School and to become a part of this special community. It is a very important, but also exciting, time for the school. We have a dedicated team who have guided the school through an unprecedented pandemic and a very supportive parent community. I am looking forward to strengthening relationships and links with the wider community, and to working with the church and our school community as we embark on an exciting future together. "Wateringbury School has excellent facilities and learning resources, including an amazing library and extended classrooms, and wonderful school grounds which include a pond and wildlife areas. We also have an excellent early years provision which ensures children receive the best possible start to their primary education. I am really excited about the journey that this school is on and cannot wait to get started."

Gail Isted, Chair of Governors at Wateringbury, added: "We are delighted to welcome Debbie as our new headteacher. She is a talented and well-respected senior educational leader and practitioner with a successful track record of developing schools and improving outcomes. Debbie shares our ambition to move our school forward to ensure we meet the needs of all our pupils through the provision of quality teaching and learning experiences and opportunities that will inspire, excite and enable everyone to achieve within a safe, nurturing and enriching environment."

Wateringbury CE Primary School was rated Good in all areas by Ofsted during its last inspection in 2017.

To contact the school about a Reception place for your child in September 2022, please call 01622 812199 or email office@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk
www.wateringbury.kent.sch.uk

WATERINGBURY CHURCH - SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER

SJB Church web site: www.wateringburychurch.org.uk

Church Face Book Page: fb.me/wateringburychurch

Friends of SJB Church web site www.fowc.org.uk

Services in Church For the time being Covid regulations mean that it is not feasible to hold an 8.30am Prayer Book Holy Communion Service on the 3rd Sunday in the month. Week by week services at St John the Baptist Church are as below:

5th Sept - 10am – Matins with Barry Fisher
Baptism led by Rev Gary

12th Sept - 10am – Service leader to be confirmed

19th Sept - 10am - All Age Worship
Baptism led by Rev Gary

26th Sept - 10am – Communion with Rev Gary

3rd Oct - 10am – Morning Praise with Barry

To comply with Covid regulations it is important that those hoping to attend a service notify their wish by emailing before 2pm on the prior Saturday to

office@wateringburychurch.org.uk / 01622 813852.

WEEKLY ZOOM BENEFICE BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Thursdays at 7.30pm for about an hour Rev **Gary Townsend** invites you to join him for bible study. To join please email gary.rev@outlook.com for the link to the meeting.