

VILLAGE DIARY

MARCH			
1	Footpaths Walk	Car Park	2 pm
3	Parish Council Meeting followed by Planning Comm	Village Hall	7.30pm
11	Crafters Coffee Morning	Church	10.30
14	Village Hall Quiz Night	Village Hall	7 for 7.30pm
17	Parish Council Highways Committee meeting	Village Hall	7 pm
18	History Society	Village Hall	7.40pm
25	Crafters Coffee Morning	Church	10.30
APRIL			
5	Footpaths Walk	Car Park	2.30pm
7	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
15	History Society	Village Hall	7.40pm

BOOK THE DATES

VE 75TH Anniversary of Peace in Europe 1945-2020
Church Service 10am **Sunday 10th May**

Flowers For Peace - Flower Festival at the Church
23rd, 24th and 25th May

Churchyard Plant Sale 23rd May 10am-1pm

Village Summer Fete Sunday 7th June– Playing Fields

WANTED COVER PICTURES FOR ROSTRUM

We are looking for cover pictures for future Rostrum magazine issues. So if you have some great photos or have painted some interesting artwork and are willing to share them please send them to the Rostrum team either by email or hard copies. (Contact details on back cover)

VILLAGE PEOPLE

Please let us have your news and tributes by 17 March for our April magazine. Entries are free.

REST IN PEACE

John Piper 26.02.45-3.12.19

John Piper of Glebe Meadow, passed away 3rd December 2019 in Maidstone Hospital aged 74. John lived most his adult life in Glebe Meadow with his wife Pam and their 3 sons Derek, Lee and Ian. The Funeral took place on 17th December in St John the Baptist church then for Burial in the cemetery. John will be mostly remembered for his running of the entertainments in Waterringbury Working Men's Club for many years.

John Harper 1937-2019

John moved to Waterringbury in the 1970s where he later settled into family life with wife, Mary and daughters, Sarah and Anna. His early career was in "The Print" working for a time on The Eagle comic at Hulton Press in Fleet Street. Later, he ran his own business Harperset, a graphic design/printing/publishing company based in Eccles. John had served in the RAF and was greatly interested in events from World War II. He also had a passion for classical music and MGs. In recent years he could be found walking locally with his canine companion, Dylan, and chatting to his neighbours. John died just before Christmas.

Anne Lesley Ede 12.09.41-22.01.20

Anne was born in Sutton, Surrey at the height of WW2. Her father was a Sergeant and at the end of the war he stayed in Berlin as part of the occupying forces, joined by his wife and daughter Annie. Following a Convent education, Anne, like many in her generation, studied to become a professional secretary. She met her husband Bob, a neighbour, when she was 20 and they were married two years later in Cheam, Surrey. Bob's work took them to live in many parts of the country but eventually, in 1977, brought them, with children Nicky, Martin and Suzie, to Waterringbury. Anne was a very special lady, she loved people and in her gentle, caring way she put her Christian Faith into action helping, loving, listening and supporting countless people. She loved the simple things in life and found the good in everyone she met. The world will miss her goodness and charity.

WATERINGBURY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

One of the wettest winters on record hasn't deterred our children from taking to the outdoors. Our children took part in the RSPB's Big Schools' Birdwatch 2020 under the careful tutelage of Alice Yelf who had to persuade a group of children that a magpie really wasn't a golden eagle.

Exactly one year ago, we asked for our community's help when our boiler suffered a catastrophic breakdown and you responded, as always, magnificently. This year, we're launching a capital campaign to raise **£25,000** so that we can extend two of our smallest and most cramped classrooms to improve the teaching and learning environment for our Upper School pupils. Details of how the local community can help will follow next month. **In the meantime, if you or your business thinks you may be able to help us with a donation or sponsorship, please email our Co-chair of governors Gail Isted at gisted@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk**

Our children have been busy with various fundraising efforts. In February, a team of Year 6 pupils raised money for the Australian Red Cross relief fund for those affected by the bush fires and raised an impressive £180. A Year 2 pupil joined their efforts by selling koala and kangaroo sketches and his £50 will go towards funds for orphaned and injured animals.

A number of new trips have taken place this term with Year 6 visiting the British Library and their exhibition on Buddhism. Year 4 enjoyed a brilliant workshop on portraiture at the National Gallery in London which will enhance their work on local history and their study of the portraits of the workers in industries critical to Watlingbury's growth and prosperity. Our Senior Choir members took to the stage at Wembley Arena, joined by 4,000 other school choir members, as part of the Young Voices series of concerts. The children worked hard each week leading up to the concert to learn the music, lyrics and actions. The massed choir is accompanied by professional musicians and stars and the evening was a gala performance.

Our annual Shakespeare production, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, was staged by our Year 5 class who added a number of song and dance routines to bring the story to life. *The class wrote original Shakespearean lines with their own to produce a unique version which Shakespeare himself would have loved! The study of the play began with a visit to The Globe Theatre in London.*

Following the half-term, children were busy in classrooms demonstrating their arithmetic methods to parents as part of our Maths Forum workshops. Digital leaders marked Safer Internet Day with an important assembly about e-Safety and how to manage online activity with safety.

Chasey Crawford Usher – Headteacherwww.watlingbury.kent.sch.uk

VILLAGE HALL QUIZ EVENING Saturday 14th March.at Watlingbury Village Hall Doors Open at 7pm for 7.30pm

Always a fun evening. All you need is a team of 6-8 people (or come on your own, we will match you up with others to make up a team). There will be a raffle...and prizes for the quiz winners. Please bring your own food and drinks. Tea and coffee will be available. The cost is £8 per person and proceeds will be used to help maintain and equip our splendid Village Hall.

Please don't leave booking your place till the last minute; many were disappointed when we had to cancel the quiz planned for last February. To book a table...or a place...please ring Mike Hoiles on 01622 813573 or e-mail mikejhoiles@aol.com.Mike Hoiles

Could you be a Governor at our local primary school?

- Do you want to make a difference to your local community?
- Do you have prior governance or board level experience, or do you have experience of primary school teaching, income generation, facilities management or ICT?
- Do you have the confidence to ask challenging questions?

Wateringbury CE Primary School currently has a vacancy for a voluntary Foundation Governor to join our school's governing body. The governing body:

- helps to set and review the school's vision and strategic direction and agrees targets for improvement
- holds the headteacher and school leaders to account for the academic performance of the school and its pupils
- oversees the financial performance of the school, making sure that public money is well spent.

In addition, Foundation Governors help to ensure that the school's Christian ethos is preserved and developed, and the religious worship reflects the tradition of the Church of England.

What does the role offer?

- A sense of achievement in helping to make a difference to children's progress and achievement
- Access to a programme of free education/governance training
- A chance to develop your own personal and leadership/management skills.

If you can answer YES to any of the questions above and are interested in finding out more about the Foundation Governor role, please speak to any of our existing Foundation Governors – Chris Clark, Richard Dunn, Suzanne Rowlinson, Kate Millar, Eleanor Sutton or Alice Dunstall. Alternatively, please contact the Clerk of Governors Sara Wallis by emailing governors@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk

Apologies to anyone who travelled to East Malling Singers' Indoor **Boot Fair in East Malling** Village Hall on Sunday, 9th February. Unfortunately that was the day of Storm Caira and the Boot Fair was cancelled. We're very sorry if anyone made the effort to go on such a stormy morning.

It has been re-scheduled to **Sunday 5th April**, again in East Malling Village Hall. Doors open to the public 9.00-12.30. Setting up starts at 8.00. There will be refreshments. Tables are £10.00, Entry is £1.00, children free. Contact 01622 750943 for more information

NETTLESTEAD AND WATERINGBURY PRESCHOOL (NWPS) AND OUT OF SCHOOLS' CLUB GRADED AS OUTSTANDING BY OFSTED

Our lovely cherubs enjoy dressing up as Superhero's and have been out and about in the woods, saving the world and searching for other Superhero's – well done Miss M. Other children have enjoyed making 3D structures, with playdoh, spaghetti and cereal hoops, showing concentration and control.

We have again visited Paddock Wood library. The children enjoyed looking through books and listening to stories, before catching the train back to Nettlestead.

Whilst we have had a lot of rain we have managed to get out into the park and woodland areas most days, to play on the Wheely Toys, search for dinosaurs and have even been on a bear hunt – splashing through the water, mud, wind and trees to find a bear in the cave! During our Pet Week children brought in photographs of their pets and we had visits from 2 dogs and a miniature Macaw!

Childcare, Education and Out of School Clubs, including holiday club 01622 813120, enquiries@nwps.uk, <https://nwpreschool.org.uk/>

TESTON AND WATERINGBURY PRESCHOOL

Our theme for term 4 has been based around a book called 'There is no dragon in this story' by Lou Carter and Deborah Allwright. This is a brilliant story and an exciting way to introduce classic tales to the children including our favourites, the gingerbread man and Hansel and Gretel.

We will also be celebrating world book day on 5th March when children will be dressing up as their favourite book character and reading about 'rabbits spring adventures'!

This term we will be celebrating St. David's day. The children will be learning all about Wales and having welsh rarebit for our snack. St. Patrick's day is also celebrated this term where the children will be learning about the country of Ireland, and wearing the traditional colour of green. Mother's day is also celebrated during this term where the children will be making cards and presents for loved ones

Finally, we have a fun quiz night on Friday 27th March in Teston village hall at 7.30pm. £10.00 per person which includes a selection of pizza. Teams of 6 or 8. Bring your own drink. If you are interested in entering a team please email us on tandwngroup@gmail.com

If you are interested in joining our preschool please contact Tina Driver on 07805 796353 and come along for a taster session.

Russian Concert

On Saturday 4th April in East Malling church there will be a concert of Russian choral music, including Rachmaninoff and Borodin, performed by East Malling Singers. For more details contact 01622 750943 or boxoffice@eastmallingsingers.co.uk

HISTORY SOCIETY

Our annual summer outing will be to Brighton Pavilion on the Wednesday 29th July 2020, the cost of which will be confirmed at a later date.

You may be interested to know that on the first Wednesday of each month there is a free behind the scenes tour of Kent Archives at Springfield Library where you can find out more about their work looking after Kent's historic archives and local history and meeting some of the staff. They take up to 10 people on a first come first served basis and booking can be made on line.

Our meetings are in the village hall with tea or coffee from 7.40 pm with the talk beginning at 8 pm. Visitors welcome at £3.00"

FOOTPATHS GROUP

Sunday 1st March meet village hall for local walk again 2pm

Sunday 5th April meet village hall for local walk 2:30pm

Note later summertime start

With recent wet weather, our February walk was rather slippery underfoot, to say the least, not helped by the number of mountain and off-road bikes illegally using footpaths.

Leaving the start, we took the Gransden path, through the nectarine trees towards Canon Lane. We turned towards Cattering Woods on the way to Kings Hill, and then followed the perimeter bridle-path with the woodland to our right to the former Teston Road. It was decided now to road walk back to the start because of the conditions of the paths. Passing the North Pole, we returned along Redhill to the start.

Kevin Reynolds – 0771 3740 375

WATERINGBURY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

At our February meeting the Rochester based poet Bridget Nolan talked about her lifelong love of writing and in particular the writing of poetry. She is a published writer of fiction and poetry and she began by reading to us from her anthology 'A Walk with Charles Dickens'. The first poem imagines a walk around the city visiting locations which would be recognisable to Dickens today. Bridget reminded us that we are all writers of some sort and that writing is one of the most common ways in which feelings and ideas are expressed. When writing poetry formal rules do not always have to be followed as she demonstrated in her own work. She is a great believer in people of all ages having a go at writing a poem.

The competition winners were Joan Wilson for a photo and Janet Talbert for an illustrated poem. The photo competition for March is for Spring flowers. The March meeting is Competitions Day for members only.

Margaret Malshe

NEWS FROM OUR BOROUGH COUNCILLOR SARAH HUDSON

Speeding in Watlingbury hit the headlines last month, with local newspaper reports and a camera crew from both ITV

& KMTV turning up, to interview David Merry, the village Speed watch coordinator and myself. In 2019, more letters were sent to drivers, speeding through Watlingbury, than Ashford, Canterbury and Dover combined!

I then contacted Kent Police Road Policing Unit, with the speed watch data, and managed to get two visits to the village over two weekends. I appreciate that weekends are not necessarily the best time to catch offenders, but it is better than nothing, and I hope that now, with the media interest, we can keep the momentum up, and keep pressurising both KCC and Kent Police to provide us with the support and speed reduction measures that we so clearly need. I attended a meeting of the Parish Partnership Panel, where representatives from Kent Police, Kent Highways and others were present, and again raised the problem of speeding and the perceived lack of support from all parties in trying to reduce these incidents. It is simply not good enough to have to wait for a fatality, in order for these bodies to act!

There are over 250 signatures on the petition to get the speed limit on Bow Road reduced to 20mph. You can find the petition at The Handy Store, and at the Post Office. If you haven't signed it yet, please do? Your support is vital in getting important changes made.

The funds to create a living wall at the crossroads have been raised, thanks to a very generous donation of £5,000 from Mr Fergus Wilson. This is being delivered through Wateringbury Village Hall, to whom the donation was made, as they are a registered charity. So watch as the Community Air Quality Gardens take shape, and if you want to join the team of volunteers needed to create this great addition to the village, then please let me know?

Sarah.hudson@tmhc.gov.uk

Hopefully, many of you will have noticed the new planters at the Welcome to Wateringbury signs. These are now planted and hopefully will brighten the area. Thanks to all involved.

I am looking for volunteers to help run a Community Larder at the Village Hall. This is an effort to combat food waste, and is open to everyone, not just Wateringbury residents. It is hoped to run on Tuesday afternoons from 3-5pm, so if you are interested in helping with this initiative, then please let me know, using my contact details above.

Paddock Wood Choral Society 40th Anniversary Celebration “An evening with Handel”, Saturday 21st March 2020, 7.30 pm, at St. Andrew's Church, Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood. Tickets £12.50 (Under 19's free) Online from our website www.paddockwood-choral.org.uk, on the door, or Email: tickets@paddockwood-choral.org.uk

WATERINGBURY GUIDES

We started 2020 with a Great British Guide Bake off evening focusing on cookies for the technical challenge and cupcakes for the show stoppers. We had our annual visit to the Pantomime and supported Hayleigh, one of our leaders who was in it.

Our challenge evening included a wide range of activities – changing a car tyre and repairing a bike puncture and learning a neat trick for getting the chain back on without getting plastered! We also made bird boxes, built a computer, made mocktails, learnt how to sew badges or buttons on and made bunting. We had first aid scenarios to deal with and the use of a public phone box in the event of an emergency. Thanks to all the parents and friends who came along to share their skills.

Instead of Valentine's Day we had an 'All about me' night and for Shrove Tuesday we are planning pancakes with a twist. Our Amazing Animal World is coming to visit and we hope to end the term with a family quiz night.

If you have a daughter who would like to join us please contact us. We would also welcome more adult help. Just email us at wateringburyguides@hotmail.com Sheena, Emily and Hayleigh.

WATERINGBURY SPORTS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION

Wateringbury Community and Sports Building Proposal.

This is a short introduction to a Proposal in Progress for a new Community and Sports Building in the Wateringbury Playing Fields. What began as two separate extension ideas for the Wateringbury Sports and Recreation Association and the Scouts and Guides, has evolved into a new eco-friendly green building for shared use for the whole community. Enthusiastic support for the project has been expressed by the Primary School and Church representatives. The Proposal is for a 28m long, single storey contemporary structure, that utilises renewable energy with solar power, a green roof and contemporary cladding to blend in amongst the trees in the overflow car

park area. The building will provide a much needed public toilet, changing rooms, kitchen/bar and a large multi-purpose hall. We also propose a volunteer run cafe for teas, coffees and soft drinks during seasonal months, with picnic tables overlooking the playing fields, an outside tap and dog bowls.

The building has been designed to Sports England Guidelines. Regarding the architectural features of the building : The door and window apertures share the timber coloured bars as both security and aesthetic appeal, with maximum natural light given to the Main Hall from above. A low flat green roof with Sky Lanterns will also offer an overhang all round for Shelter and deterrent for climbing on the roof. Security lighting and CCTV will be a requirement. We must emphasise that this proposal does not impinge on other village facilities, such as the Village Hall or Where Memories Meet. It is designed to cater for all ages for decades to come. Should Planning Permission be granted we will be looking for Government Grants that are available for Community Buildings that promote environmental design and offer soft landscaping and community exercise facilities. Fund Raising and Philanthropist donations will also be explored.

We currently have a small group of volunteers with professional skills donating their time for this venture but are a long way from achieving our goal. So if anyone has a skill-set to offer in this process, please contact us on createit@ekostructures.co.uk. Regular updates will be posted on Facebook and viewed by searching @GoldenMeanDesigns and information will be displayed in the Village Hall later this year

PARISH COUNCIL METING NOTES

February 2020

Repairs to the wall outside the Village Hall have been completed. The police have been asked if they had followed up information given on the damage to the wall. Repairs to the track to the playing fields have been delayed due to bad weather.

Members of the Council are due to meet with KCC to discuss a Highways Improvement Plan
Two speed surveys in the village were requested and paid by The Parish Council

A War Graves Commission sign is now displayed at the entrance to the cemetery.

KCC Councillor, Matthew Balfour advised that the KCC is keen to implement strategies intended to reduce the county's carbon footprint. He asked if the Parish Council wanted to accept his offer of a moveable speed sign. The offer was declined as the Speedwatch Group would be unable to move the equipment around the village, plus storage would be a problem. The Parish Council wants to replace the fixed speed sign at the junction of Canon Lane and A26. A request was made for the KCC Councillor to pursue the repair of the A26 road surface from before Danns Lane towards Pizien Well Road.

Borough Councillor, Sarah Hudson advised that she had been interviewed by local media about speeding in the village. She contacted Kent Police and this resulted in a traffic police presence by the railway station and on Red Hill during some subsequent weekends. In 2019 the number of vehicles speeding through the village exceeded figures supplied in the Ashford, Canterbury and Dover areas combined. A petition to put a 20 mph speed zone on Bow Road has attracted 250 signatures and is still available in the post office. Planters have been set up by the Welcome to Waterringbury sign, filled with compost and planted up.

Crime report: the format has changed. The new monthly newsletter does not cover Watringbury. Cllr Hudson has been asked to investigate as information which is obtainable on the Kent Police website is usually out of date.

The Council had made enquiries of their insurance provider to ask if volunteers would be covered to carry out repairs to the Stocks near the village hall. The requirements were involved and it was felt the cost to insure would outweigh the quote received for £170 from Chris Chaplin. It was agreed to accept the quote.

The possibility of creating a “living wall” at the crossroads was discussed (i.e. planting an area in the ragstone wall with hairy-leaved plants that attract particulate matter). Cllr Hudson stated the village hall had received a donation of £5000 towards the cost and asked the councils permission to put this on the ragstone wall. This was agreed and arrangements would be made to remove the ivy from the wall

Plans for the new proposed sports pavilion in the playing fields are moving forward. The committee has been urged to obtain clarification of the lease by a legal adviser.

An inspection report on streetlights in the village indicates that extensive repair is required, largely due to vandalism. Many lights also need to be replaced with LED fittings. A meeting would be arranged with the contractor to discuss the report further.

The Council praised the Speedwatch Group Co-ordinator for his article in the Kent Messenger.

The Village Warden reported that the rubbish bin in the basketball court area of the playing fields has still not been replaced and Cllr Hudson will chase this outstanding matter with TMBC. Bus stops have been cleaned of graffiti recently.

During the public session it was brought to the attention of the Council that **bicycles and horses had been using footpaths in the area**. A suggestion was made to perhaps install some form of gate on the footpath that runs alongside Watringbury Place **The Council was thanked for installing the war memorial plaque in the cemetery**. It was noted that the **Bow Road sign** has not been replaced after being damaged a year ago. There is a lot of **ivy growing in the trees at the crossroads** which needs attention.

A resident who had crossed the Tonbridge Road near the Post Office and tried to gauge traffic flow using the traffic lights without pressing the pedestrian light button, warned that this is not safe for pedestrians.

Planning Meeting - Applications

Coppice Count, 70 Teston Road – erection of building for indoor dog training. This application appears to be an attempt to address issues relating to the earlier application refused by the LPA and subsequently dismissed at Appeal. Whilst the size of the proposal has been reduced, it is, in the opinion of the Parish Council, still an unacceptable size and mass. This, together with the reasons for objection by the neighbours, with which we agree and fully support, is our considered opinion and we object to the application and ask that it is refused by the LPA.

Mulberry Cottage, 230 Red Hill – demolition of existing barn and erection of 3 bedroom dwelling with integral double garage. All previous comments on TM/19/01993/FL (Conversion and extension to existing barn to create a 3 bedroom dwelling with integral double garage) remain the same for this application
TM/20/00003/LB 59 Bow Road Listed Building consent: replace timber in ground floor window. Comment: no objection

The public are welcome to attend the next meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 3 March at 7.30pm in the Village Hall (upper meeting room)
Approved minutes of the February meeting will appear on the Parish Council website
www.wateringburypc.kentparishes.gov.uk in due course

WATERINGBURY CHURCH SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

[SJB Church web site: www.wateringburychurch.org.uk](http://www.wateringburychurch.org.uk)

[Church Face Book Page: fb.me/wateringburychurch](https://fb.me/wateringburychurch)

[Friends of SJB Church web site www.fowc.org.uk](http://www.fowc.org.uk)

Saturday 14th March – 3-5pm - Messy Church (for families with young children) Please note this is the 2nd Saturday in March

There will be craft activities, a short bible story and prayer times and ours will always end with afternoon tea. We will be thinking about Jesus healing Jairus' daughter. We welcome new families – so do come along.

Sunday 1st March (first in Lent) - 10am – Communion

Led by Canon Liz Walker

A Communion service based on the Church of England Common Worship Service Book. Sundays Cool (for all children) meets in the Vestry during the service.

Sunday 8th March– 10am - Matins –

Led by Bary Fisher and Pauline Welch

A service from the Prayer Book with well known hymns and an address. Secondary Division, for young people, meet for a second breakfast and discussion during the service in the vestry.

Sunday 15th March

8.30pm Prayer Book Said Communion

A quiet service using the beautiful words of Cranmer

Led by Canon Derek Carpenter.

10am All Age Worship

This informal service will be led by the Sundays Cool team.

Sunday 22nd March – Mothering Sunday - 10am – Communion

Led by Rev Jim Brown

As is our custom small posies will be presented to the ladies in the congregation. We use the service booklets produced when Jim was our vicar and the choir leads our singing. Sundays Cool meets in the Vestry.

Sunday 29th March – Joint Benefice Service - 9.30am in Mereworth Church Led by Canon Brian Stevenson

As this is the 5th Sunday in the month there is only one service in the Benefice. This time at Mereworth. It affords the opportunity to worship God with the congregations of Mereworth, West Peckham and Wateringbury and gives us the chance to get to know each other better.

We hope you will be able to join us. Refreshments are served after our 10am services so do stay for a chat if you can

A VIEW FROM THE PEWS

Wateringbury from above

Imagine a fixed drone with a video camera high above the crossroads in Wateringbury filming a 24-hour period. Playing it back at a speedy rate would reveal the ebb and flow of movement, in, around and through the village. First thing to be visible in the darkness of the early morning would be the lines of streetlights marking up a general shape of routes and the twice hourly movement of a line of coaches from the train zipping through. Gradually, lines of red rear car lights and front white lights build up, as commuter cars queue at the traffic lights. Sunrise illuminates the landscape, creating long shadows in the west, glowing house sides in the east, and a shining silvery surface of the river flowing past the southern reaches of the village.

Like ants far below, human and dog combinations slip quietly onto the footpaths and walkways for morning constitutionals. There is activity in the horse-fields as feeding and early morning necessities take place and farm tractors can be seen moving onto fields surrounding the built up area. Flocks of birds, swans and geese wake up and start to splash about disturbing the water. Dark bag carrying and uniformed dots become visible moving from house to car and clustering at bus stops. The uniformed bag carrying dots are hoovered up by the stopping oblongs of buses. Then the great crescendo begins. Prams, smaller tottering infants, in clusters of families, and the yellow chains of walking lines from the nurseries would indicate, as they close in from all angles swarming around primary school.

Suddenly, all these small people would disappear inside the large blocks of the school building, leaving a trace membrane of expanding dispersing lines and clusters of adults zipping off in different directions. There will be two or three more sudden swarms of small dots flooding out into the surrounding field and playground as break and lunch time happens.

Now across the whole village, our drone's-eye-view reveals a different pattern of movement. Fewer cars and a different mix on the pavements. Joggers, slower moving dots as a different generation emerge into the public spaces to and from shops, hairdressers, village hall and up at the Church and cafes for coffee mornings, lunches and afternoon teas. A steady flow goes in and out of the surgery. The odd boat passes by, leaving a long pattern of arrows in the water behind. Folk with fishing rods settle along the banks. At the garage and the boatyard workers pull respective automobile or cruisers in and out of working spots. The odd lawn changes colour as the mower cross it from side to side in a number of houses. Groups periodically gather and disperse near the village hall, as events take place, classes meet and conclude.

The cycle of the great gathering of the prams and families occurs again as the huge outpouring of blue uniformed smaller persons would flood out into the playgrounds and find their adults and routes home. After school, lines would drift to after school classes and later, as the sun sets, smaller groups would be seen leaving their houses and descending on the scout and guide HQ, the large lit windows of the village hall, and also the village pubs and the club.

As darkness returns the lights of the streets and the waiting cars on the roads return. Lights come on around the many shapes of houses and homes across the village, as darkness settles and people return home. The Church is lit temporarily for an evening event. As night draws in all these lights would blink out, gradually sending the village back into darkness section by section. Finally, the lines of streetlights and the odd vehicle and flashing blue of an ambulance are visible, with an occasional snake of lights of train, and a watery full moon gleaming up from the river. How blessed we are to live here.

Bob Bowie

Messy Church

Our numbers are growing but there is always room for more families with young children. Come and join in singing, stories using videos, activities and games and varied crafts to illustrate our themes which this year looks at the stories of Jesus healing people. We will also look at the work of our doctors and nurses.

We meet at our church on MOST first Saturdays in the month from **3pm – 5pm. However please note, in March Messy Church will take place on the SECOND - Saturday 14th March.**

Ruth Dunn: ruthdunn33@btinternet.com

CRAFTERS COFFEE MORNINGS

This month we will meet at the church on the mornings of **Wednesdays 11th and 25th March** from 10.30am until 12.30pm. Come and join us for coffee/tea, cake, chat and perhaps revive an interest in handicraft or share your knowledge of a craft. In January Miranda showed us how to make felt robins and in February Rosemary has been showing some how to crochet. Lots just sit and chat. For more information please contact Pauline (814673) or Gillian (813076).

FLOWER FESTIVAL 23rd, 24th and 25th May

To mark the 75th Anniversary of the end of World War 2 we are planning a **Flowers for Peace Flower Festival** in the church. We hope that many village organisations, clubs and individuals will join the commemoration and sponsor a flower arrangement. **There will be a Festival Programme which will tell about the organisation sponsoring the arrangement or the WW2 story it honours.** Some sponsors will wish to arrange their own flowers, others will ask the organisers to link them with an arranger. So if you would enjoy arranging flowers and would like to join in our community event please contact Gillian. For more details please contact Gillian Sessions 01622 813076.

CHURCHYARD PLANT SALE 23rd May 10am-1pm When dividing garden plants or sowing seeds this Spring please pot up some for the annual plant sale.

Do go along to the Church and enjoy

SIMPLY SOUP LUNCHEAS IN LENT on 3 WEDNESDAYS

From 12.15 to 1.30pm There is no charge –

Donations are invited for a different charity each week

4th March - Hazel Oak Special School

18th March - Freddie's Friends (*Local Cancer Support Group*)

1st April - Cancer Research UK

Friday 6th March - World Day of Prayer –

Praying with Zimbabwe

Do try and join this world-wide event. Our local services this year will be in **West Malling Baptist Church**

10.30am (refreshments from 10am) and

8pm (refreshments from 7.30pm)

SPRING CRAFT FAIR IN ST LAWRENCE'S CHURCH MEREWORTH

Saturday 14th March – 11.30pm - 2.30pm

Lots of Stalls and Delicious Refreshments

Entry Free

FOCUS ON FAITH – BIBLE DAYS FOR WOMEN

Wednesday 18th March – 9.15am (first session 9.45am) to 2.15pm

Led by Jean Kerr - "I CAN SEE CLEARLY"

Cost £10 to include drinks, soup and sandwich lunch

In Ryarsh Village Hall – booking essential for catering purposes

Please bring bible and a notebook

For more details text/phone 07927 325 977

Email focusonfaith1@gmail.com www.focusonfaith.co.uk

PLEASE SUPPORT FAIR TRADE

Fairtrade is about better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world. With Fairtrade you have the power to change the world every day. With simple shopping choices you can get farmers a better deal. And that means they can make their own decisions, control their future and lead the dignified life everyone deserves.



The church has a fair trade stall after most 10am services and there are lots of fair trade choices in supermarkets

IN OUR SORROWS - FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

We extend our deepest sympathy to the loved ones of:

Georgina Mary Lamb 11.02.28 - 05.01.20 - Funeral 7th February

Anne Lesley Ede 12.09.41 - 22.01.20 - Funeral 13th February

