

VILLAGE DIARY

September			
1st	Parish Council Meeting <i>followed by Planning Committee Meeting</i>	Remotely via Zoom	7.30pm

VILLAGE PEOPLE *Please let us have your news and tributes by 17 September for our October magazine. Entries are free.*

Welcome back to the September printed edition of Rostrum after three months of publishing the magazine on-line only.

As not all our readers have access to internet, we are including all entries to the VILLAGE PEOPLE column from May to July/August e-editions.

The village has lost several residents in recent weeks. Rostrum sends its sincere condolences to their families and friends. Only very close family were able to attend their funerals. Many hope to have Thanksgiving Services for families and friends to attend once the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

REST IN PEACE**Rev Alan Searle (28.3.47 – 10.3.20)**

Alan Mansfield Searle died suddenly while in the care of the Emily Jackson home in Sevenoaks. Alan and Joy and their family came to live in Watringbury in the early 1980s. Alan served as church warden for many years and in the time of Rev Denys Gower felt God was calling him into the priesthood. While working full-time for the NHS in IT, which necessitated wrestling with the traffic on the M25 on a daily basis, and coping with a blood disorder, Alan completed the necessary studies. Following ordination Alan served Watringbury church faithfully on a non-stipendiary basis and ministered in the Benefice and further afield. Sadly in the last few years Alan became increasingly disabled by vascular dementia and was lovingly and devotedly cared for by Joy for as long as this was possible.

We would like to thank everyone for the many cards, letters and gifts we have received since Alan died. Each and everyone has been much appreciated, the kind words, thoughts and memories of Alan have been a great comfort at this time of isolation. Revd Jim Brown conducted a very special service at the graveside in the most beautiful weather; Alan is now at peace in God's loving arms. We hope to hold a thanksgiving service for his life sometime in the future, in the meantime thank you to everyone for such care, love and support shown to us in the past few weeks. Joy & family.

Richard Dunn

We were all shocked and stunned to learn of Richard's death in hospital in the early hours of Tuesday 24th March. Richard and Ruth's Caribbean cruise ship, MV Braemar, experienced an outbreak of the coronavirus and so the ship had difficulty in finding a country which would let passengers disembark. Cuba showed compassion so eventually they arrived home late on Thursday evening (19th) and went into isolation. Richard was poorly and on Monday he was taken into hospital and later placed in intensive care. Within a few hours he had lost his battle against the virus. Richard had spent his life helping others. His working life was in teaching; many years spent at Bennett Memorial Diocesan School within the senior management team. Approaching retirement Richard and Ruth moved into the village to be nearer to their grandson. Richard answered the plea for

a Church Treasurer, a demanding role which he did with typical precision and an eye to careful management of our funds. He was in a holy dusters team to clean the church and set up second-hand book sales. At any function Richard quietly was there to lend a hand, usually one of the first to arrive and the last to leave. He also shared his expertise with our village school as a Foundation governor and volunteered in the book section of the Cancer Research shop in Maidstone.

Ted Vincent (7/01/26-10/04/20)

Ted died at home in the early hours of Good Friday. He was a man of many talents, a skilled mechanic, wood turner and gardener, who could turn his hand successfully to most things. (He refurbished the chandelier which hangs over the font in the church). He had a life-long interest in aircraft which stemmed from his National Service in the RAF. Yet for all his talents he was a modest man, interested in others, and justly proud of his children Denise and David, grandchildren and great grandchildren. He maintained his cheerful disposition and positive outlook on life to the end. We will miss seeing Ted out and about on his mobility scooter.

Mandy Mitchelmore (October 1960- March 2020)

Mandy was a local lass attending primary schools in East Malling and then Invicta in Maidstone. She did her nurse training at Guys Hospital in London and later worked in Queen Elizabeth hospital in Woolwich as assistant director of nursing. In May 1991 she married Dave in East Malling Church. While their daughter Shona was young she studied for her second Masters Degree. In 2004 she started work at the University of Greenwich and her final post with them was as Principal Lecturer and Programme Leader in Adult Nursing and Paramedic Sciences. She was fiercely positive and selfless in her service for others; even in her own difficult times she was full of love and hope. Her greatest joy was her family Dave, Shona and Tina

Josephine (Jo) Williams (nee Wells)

Jo spent most of her life in Wateringbury. She was born in Old Road and lived there until her family moved during World War II to Wateringbury Villa on the Tonbridge Road. She married Aubrey in Wateringbury Church in March 1956 and after living in Mereworth for some years they returned to Wateringbury until ill health meant she needed specialist nursing care. She died on Palm Sunday. Jo's father Charles was vergar at the church for many years and Jo enjoyed being a bellringer. Like many of her generation she worked at the Phoenix Brewery before the arrival of her son Huw. In later years she assisted at the village post office in the days when Mike Barnes was postmaster and her cheerful smile and friendly hello welcomed customers.

Peter George Curd (28 July 1928 – 18 May2020)

Peter was the middle child of James George and Dorothy Audrey Curd, an old established local family. He lived all his life in Pizienwell and at the age of 4 he moved with his family to 141 Pizienwell Road, and there he spent the rest of his days. He started his working life as an interior decorator. At the age of 19 he became a carpenter and worked with the local bomb damage repair team. Later he made chestnut fencing in the local woods. His love of gardening led to his final job which was as gardener at Mereworth Castle. His own garden was always a picture and gave enjoyment to many passers-by. A recent fall caused Peter to be hospitalised

and he died in Pembury Hospital from Corona related pneumonia. His cremation was on 8th June.

Richard 'Smudger' Smith (1950 – 2020)

Richard passed away in June following a short illness. He was a loving husband, kind, considerate and caring. I feel privileged that we were able to have had 49 years together. He was very proud of his sons Ryan and Robin, his daughter-in-law Vicky, the daughter we never had, and of course our beautiful granddaughter, Felicity.

Richard was very sociable and knew so many people that wherever we went he would go missing being found talking to someone he knew. One of our friends mentioned recently that even when we went to Minorca on holiday a group of his friends turned up at the restaurant.

I wanted to share one of the many tributes we received: "Smudger' had a special gift that few possess, the ability to cheer, encourage and brighten people's days with his dry sense of humour and kindness. He will be missed by all'.

Ryan, Robin and I would like to thank all of our friends, family and neighbours for the numerous cards, texts, flowers and messages of support that we received. Special thanks to Jane & Trevor Hambly for their support throughout Richard's illness and continuing help and assistance and not forgetting Simon Barton, Richard's Comrade in Arms.
Jane Smith

CONGRATULATIONS to Bob and Sandra Edmunds on the arrival of their granddaughter **Juno Georgiana Patel** who was born on 1st May in Kings Hospital, London weighing in at 7lbs 8oz. A first baby for **Lucy and Dipak**

CONGRATULATIONS to Katie and Dean on the arrival of their first baby **Cody William** who was born in Pembury Hospital on 25th June and weighed 8lbs. **A third grandson for Karen and Adrian.**

THANK YOU TO HANDY STORES

Hilary and Barry Fisher would like to extend their grateful thanks to Benny and Rupal for all the help they gave us in delivering the papers and groceries whilst we were 'shielding' in accordance with the Covid-19 regulations.

What a blessing it is that we have their shop on our doorstep and that they are always so helpful in providing what we need.

HISTORY SOCIETY

At the moment we are unable to make any arrangements for re-starting meetings, despite suggestions of a return to "normality" by Christmas. The hall intends to re-open from Tuesday 1st September and the Village Hall Committee representatives will inform us how the hall has been safeguarded, for Covid-19 now and in the future. As soon as we are able, we will let you know when we can commence our meetings.

WATERINGBURY FLOWER CLUB

With Covid-19 shutting down most clubs and events this year, our flower club has not met now since March.

Our hard working committee came up with ideas to keep our members interested in these strange times. Contacts through social media, Zoom meetings and quiz evenings worked really well. August demonstration by our own Margaret Cowell was really successful. We even bought raffle tickets via bacs and the lucky winners had their prizes delivered!

Our Kent Area team took the decision to cover the clubs affiliation fees to our HQ in London so our clubs in Kent could continue to run. We hope all 35 clubs in Kent will prevail come Jan 2021.

Wateringbury hope to keep going as they have been until it is safe to open normally. Social distancing and limit of 40 people to an event makes it unlikely for us to have our usual open evening in October, our main fundraiser. Safety of our members and visitors is paramount. Many people are not ready to venture into gatherings yet. We hope that things will recover soon but we must all stay safe and be vigilant.

I will keep you updated in case we manage to open for our Christmas demonstration.

WATERINGBURY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Although the Wateringbury W.I. has been unable to meet for its usual meetings and summer events, the committee has made great efforts to keep in touch with members. There have been regular newsletters with illustrated contributions from members. There have also been updates from the national organisation. At this time it is not known when we will recommence Village Hall meetings. Members are currently being canvassed for their opinions and the committee will let everyone know what decisions are made. Meanwhile best wishes to all members.

FOOTPATHS GROUP

There is no walk planned for September but the group hope to resume their activities in October *Kevin Reynolds – 0771 3740 375*

NETTLESTEAD AND WATERINGBURY PRESCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOLS' CLUB

Holiday club has certainly been one to remember this year and Coronavirus has not stopped our children from enjoying fun and games in the sunshine. With such a hot summer our main resource has been water! The children have enjoyed bathing babies, water slides for dinosaurs, water fights, washing our scooters and bikes and racing in wellies full of water!

NWPS would like to thank the staff for working so hard during the hot summer to ensure the children had some fun times with their friends, and parents had a much needed break. We look forward to seeing all our children when we return in September.

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

TESTON AND WATERINGBURY PRESCHOOL

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 *Harry and his bucket full of dinosaurs* by Ian Whybrow. This simple picture book is an introduction to dinosaurs. It is about a character who self-initiates creative play and learning. Harry discovers some old toy dinosaurs in the attic and this leads to Harry taking responsibility, finding new ways to engage in creative play, and learn about dinosaurs on his own.

In our craft activities we will make a pretend train and travel to different places on our imaginary journey. We will make dinosaur eggs and look for large footprints in the garden. The children will look at different sized buckets and see how many dinosaurs will fit in each of them, discuss names of the dinosaurs and choose their favourite one to draw. We will discuss what dinosaurs ate thousands of years ago. Also we will be making a volcano, which may erupt in the pre-school garden!

At this stage, due to the coronavirus restrictions, our October AGM will not be going ahead. Further information will be emailed out to parents in September.

If you are interested in joining our preschool please contact Tina Driver on 07805 796353 or email on tandwngroup@gmail.com

George Orwell and Wateringbury

“Big Brother is watching you”

This is a quotation from Nineteen Eighty-Four, Orwell's last novel, first published in 1949, the year before his death. Its themes include many of the tools of totalitarianism: mass surveillance, the cult of personality, distortion of history and misleading terminology. As well as Big Brother it introduced many words and phrases still

commonly used: [Room 101](#), prole, [doublethink](#), [thoughtcrime](#), [Newspeak](#). The term "Orwellian" is increasingly in use in the news.

"All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" is possibly the best known quotation from Orwell's writings. It comes from his short book *Animal Farm*, written during WWII, which appears to be a children's story about the life of animals on Manor Farm, but is also a biting satire of Soviet communist totalitarianism.

Before these works made Orwell (real name Eric Blair) famous and regarded as one of the great writers of the 20th century, he wrote four other novels, three books of reportage and numerous essays reflecting his life experiences after an Eton education: including service in the imperial police in Burma washing dishes in Paris, tramping the roads in England during the depression, the Spanish civil war and hop-picking in Kent. *The Road to Wigan Pier* is the best known result.

His two plus weeks in September 1931 hop-picking here were the basis for an essay and a chapter of his novel, *A Clergyman's Daughter*. He came as a tramp down from London with a companion, Ginger, staying one night in the Malling Workhouse, an enormous building where the private road Orwell Spike between West Malling and Kings Hill, is now located. They obtained work on one of the several farms in Watringbury and Mereworth run by Frank Blest of Broomcroft, Canon Lane, but which one we cannot be sure. Possibly it was Brewers Hall Farm in Mereworth. They left at the end of the season from Watringbury station on a special hop-pickers train back to London.

Orwell kept a diary during his time hop-picking, first published long after his death in 1968 and subsequently published locally in a limited edition book in 1970 with a postscript by Frank Blest's son. The diary can be read online at <https://hoppicking.wordpress.com/>. It is not a romantic account of hop-picking but reflects the realities of life then. Since then the annual "invasion" of the village by Londoners and travellers has stopped following the introduction of mechanised picking in the late 1950s. Subsequently, hop growing has become an uneconomic crop for the area and has disappeared from Watringbury and Mereworth.

For more information on Orwell's time locally go to Watringbury Local History Society's web-site and enter Orwell in the search box.

Terry Bird

WATERINGBURY GUIDES

Watringbury Guides met virtually on Fridays via Zoom throughout lockdown, with ten to fifteen girls, out of nineteen, joining our meetings. We started with 'scavenge' hunts for certain items in the girls' own homes. At other meetings we had quizzes, discussions on personal safety and a celebration evening in red, white and blue for VE Day. We had a biscuit decorating evening and cooked cakes in a mug in the microwave. Our oven baked chocolate cake in the shell of an orange, was a success. It tasted just like chocolate orange

The most ambitious (and noisy) meeting was our pet evening. The girls had been requesting this for some time before lockdown but the thought of a HQ full of dogs, the odd cat, several rabbits, guinea pigs, and a few other offerings filled us with horror. On Zoom pets remained safely at home and we could be introduced to them one at a time, It was a very noisy evening, the 'mute' button was used frequently but it was enjoyed by all.

One of our Zoom meetings was more formal when we wore uniforms for our new member's promise. It was quite funny when some of the girls logged in and realised that the rest were wearing our guide wear, they disappeared without a word and came back also wearing theirs! No words were necessary.

Inevitably, all our outdoor activities planned for the summer term have been cancelled, or rescheduled for next year. The sailing

day, the patrol camp, the trip to *Wicked* in London, a day trip to Margate and a water fun day have all gone and recently so has our canal boat trip at the end of August.

Sadly, the summer term is our busiest and best and we feel really sorry for the girls missing out on a wide range of outdoor activities. We have just been given permission to restart face to face meetings outside but understandably Girlguiding have put in place a lot of hoops to jump through and we are working our way through them at the moment. It seems unlikely that we will be able to resume indoor meetings in September, so we continue to plan outdoor activities and hope that the weather remains kind.
Sheena, and Emily 1st Wateringbury Guides

The popular café, formerly known as Tea at Hilltop, in East Malling reopens as **Bramleys Country Kitchen**, a small, Covid-19 secure tea room. It is opened from Wednesday to Friday from 10am to 5pm for lunches and afternoon tea and from 1pm on Saturdays for Afternoon teas. The café operates a bookings only policy.
Tel: 01732 872169 www.bramleyscountrykitchen.co.uk

WATERINGBURY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

What a difference a year makes. At this time last year, our Rostrum article was full of autumn events and traditions which mark the return to school: our annual whole-school Wateringbury Walk along the river to Teston; school trips to interesting sites around Kent and London; Harvest services at school and church; Open Mornings for prospective parents and children.

September will look quite different this year but the energy and enthusiasm for school life will not have changed even as we adapt to a new normal. Most importantly, teachers are keen to return to their classrooms! We have all learned a great deal about remote learning and home schooling but for most children, the school environment provides a structure, expectation and social environment which are simply not able to be replicated at home.

Like all schools across the country, we are planning for a 'Recovery' Curriculum which rebuilds children's connections with teachers, with their peers and places a high emphasis on creative ways to re-engage children with learning. Outdoor learning and collaborative activities are high on the list as well as expressive arts and design which provide an important outlet for feelings of anxiety, frustration, anger, fear and uncertainty. A focus on reading, writing and mathematics will also be essential as these are the building blocks of education and will, without doubt, have suffered.

One year ago we earmarked this year for the realisation of a long-awaited dream to extend our two smallest classrooms. With architectural plans in place long before Covid-19 hit, we were well placed to push ahead with the building work which is now absolutely essential for the safety of the children and teachers in those classrooms. I am delighted with the work's progress and completion is scheduled prior to re-opening in September. Our Year 5 and 6 classes will finally have the space they need to move and grow in a suitable learning environment.

Our capital campaign to raise the funds for the classroom extensions continues unabated. With the support of parents and businesses, we hope to raise as much of the £25,000 as possible to plug the considerable hole in our school budget. Donations are welcome and can be made via our online fundraising page at www.givey.com/classrooms2020 or email our Co-Chair of Governors, Gail Isted, at gisted@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk.

To all our children and families and community, we look forward to sharing our news and successes as we enter this new and challenging academic year. Together, we are stronger.
Chasey Crawford Usher Headteacher

PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Planning Applications

As from 1st September the Parish Council will no longer receive any plans covering applications. These have to be viewed online. The Parish Council and residents have 14 days from the date the application is validated to submit any comments. After that date no submissions will be accepted. The Parish Council would like to remind residents if they submit any comments to TMBC to please send a copy to the council which will help them to formulate their reply.

The next Parish Council meeting on 1st September 7.30pm remotely via Zoom followed by Planning Committee Meeting. Approved minutes of the September meeting will appear on the Parish Council website www.wateringburypc.kentparishes.gov.uk in due course.

REPORT FROM OUR BOROUGH COUNCILLOR SARAH HUDSON

The Parish Council commissioned traffic surveys and just before lockdown they were completed. This was needed to ensure the interactive speed sign at Canon Lane could be replaced, and to enhance our arguments for getting a 20mph speed limit in Bow Road.

The data showed that Waterringbury has a speeding problem. Over 82% of all journeys along Tonbridge Road, in either direction, were above 31mph. Armed with this data, and the Speedwatch data that has been accumulated over the last year, I met with KCC Cabinet member for Highways and Transport, Michael Payne, and our KCC member Matthew Balfour in July, along with a traffic engineer, to discuss not just the significant speeding through the village but also the massive increase in HGVs. Various proposals were discussed and KCC have gone away to look at what they can do in terms of traffic calming upon entry to the village from Mereworth, as well as reducing the speed limit to 40mph from Pizien Well to the village. There is hopefully a funding round in the Autumn, and if this is the case, our plans will be submitted and will hopefully be successful.

I also met with Kent Police Road Policing unit to discuss the same data, and to ask for their support in enforcing the speed limit on our roads. They have promised a significant increase in visits to the area, both in marked and unmarked cars, as well as the mobile camera van. The majority of those stopped in the last 6 months for speeding in and around Waterringbury have been local people!

The Living Wall is flourishing next to the Village Hall, and the one next to the hairdressers is ready to be planted. Local sculptor, Jason Mulligan, has created a fantastic plaque for the gardens, from Kentish ragstone. And this will all be officially opened in the Autumn by our MP, Tom Tugendhat. More news on that next month

The Community Fridge is open every Friday in the Village Hall from 12 until 1.30pm. No appointment is necessary, just remember to bring a shopping bag, wear a mask and keep a sensible distance between people. This is an opportunity to not just save money on great fresh fruit and veg and other staples, but reduce food waste and therefore reduce landfill.

Over the course of the Summer, I have received countless complaints about bonfires. Please, please consider your neighbours before lighting one, and certainly do not have bonfires during the day. In the recent heat, everyone's windows were open, and laundry on the line, not to mention serious health problems.

I continue to attend meetings with other Borough Councillors and officers, two or three times a week; these are held remotely via Teams. This remote access has meant that everyone has been able to carry on with their responsibilities. I sincerely hope that the Parish Council adopt this willingness too. In this day and age, technology is readily accessible, and if it means increasing awareness in local

matters, then it is all for the good, as village residents can dial in to Zoom meetings and see what is being discussed on their behalf.

FROM OUR MP TOM TUGENDHAT

One of the best things to have come out of lockdown is how we have all started to appreciate our communities much more. Being forced to stay local has seen greater use of our public footpaths, and a surge in the number of cyclists using our roads.

To cope with this increased demand it is essential that our roads are safer for cyclists and pedestrians. One of the best ways to make this happen is to reduce the number of vehicles speeding through our countryside.

The Government have allocated millions of pounds for active travel initiatives in Kent and I am delighted that much of this is coming to Tonbridge and Malling. In Tonbridge, a town wide 20mph will be trialled for the next 6 months.

While this is good news for residents in Tonbridge, it is obvious that speeding isn't just an issue there. In our more rural roads this can be an even bigger problem. Indeed, here in Wateringbury, I've been helping residents with speeding issues on the Tonbridge Road, and there are no doubt many more in need of slower traffic.

I am hopeful that should the trial in Tonbridge be successful, Kent County Council will consider extending the use of 20mph to appropriate roads in our villages. Not every one of our roads will be suitable, and the solution might not be a 20mph zone but a smaller reduction in the existing speed limit for some.

We have a fantastic opportunity to capitalise on the appreciation of our environment with more road safety initiatives. I am keen this happens. We must be able to enjoy our environment safely and ensure that cars travel at appropriate speeds through our villages.

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

On line worship at <http://tiny.cc/krymmz> any time after 3pm on Saturday.

All previous services are also available on this site

A MESSAGE ABOUT LIVE WORSHIP AT CHURCH

We are working hard to make sure worship is as safe as is possible and follows the Government and Church of England guidance. For now, worship in church is different, without the usual singing or tea and coffee. If you think you are not well, or are showing symptoms of coronavirus, please seek the appropriate advice and stay at home. Our online worship will continue so do please join us there or the service on the Benefice Facebook page. For those who would like to come to services in church, please read the following information so you know what to expect and know what to do

We have had to set a capacity for the church (taking into account the Covid regulations). **It may prove to be the case that we won't be able to meet all the applications** and we don't want to have to turn anyone away at the door

Please notify your intention to attend Sunday Worship by 11am on Saturday
office@wateringburychurch.org.uk / 01622 813852 and familiarise yourself with the current protocol

PROTOCOL FOR MORNING PRAISE and ALL AGE WORSHIP

The following information is designed to keep everyone safe, and is in line with the guidance from the Government and the Church of England at the time of going to print. GUIDELINES MAY CHANGE AT SHORT NOTICE

- ☺ Please maintain social distancing rules at all times and be guided by the sidesperson on duty as to when it is safe to enter or leave church.
- ☺ Please use the hand sanitiser provided, or your own, as you enter and leave
- ☺ Face masks or coverings MUST now be worn inside the church.
- ☺ When you have collected your service booklet etc., a sidesperson will guide you to your allocated seat. Once in your seat please remain there for the service and do not change seats.
- ☺ To minimise any spread of infection, please try where possible, not to touch the surfaces in church as you enter or leave the building. If you use a walking aid/stick please keep it with you at all times.
- ☺ Please fill out the contact form attached to the guidance sheet which will be given to you on arrival. As you leave church please place it along with your service booklet and pen in the labelled box at the back of church.
- ☺ At the end of the service please exit, following the one way system when asked to do so. Do not linger in church but leave immediately.
- ☺ So that people can leave safely and with the correct social distancing measures, please do not gather outside the door but move on and down the path.

Do feel free to gather outside at a safe distance, to talk to each other

ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL FOR COMMUNION SERVICES

The Communion service will be, as Canon Law puts it, 'in one kind only'. The celebrant will drop a wafer into people's hands as they leave the church and not during the service.

CHURCH AND ON-LINE WORSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER 2020

On line worship at <http://tiny.cc/krymmz> any time after 3pm on Saturday.

All previous services are also available on this site

On Sunday 26th July we held our first service in church since the national lockdown on 24th March and in August a few more. We hope in September to offer a weekly service in church plus our weekly online 20 minute act of worship. **As detailed on the previous page please notify your intention to attend a church service.** This is necessary as we need to ensure that we make a seating plan taking into account household groups and social distancing. A warm Wateringbury welcome, as always, will await you

Sunday 6th 10am Communion led by Canon Liz Walker
On-line worship with reflection by Rev Nicky

Sunday 13th 10am Matins led by Barry Fisher
On-line worship with reflection by Barry

Sunday 20th 10am All Age Worship with Becky Bowie, Ruth Dunn and Kate Millar
On-line worship with reflection by Kate Millar

Sunday 27th 10am Communion led by Rev Jim Brown
On-line worship with reflection by Rev Jim

Our temporary curate Rev Nicky Harvey invites the benefice to join her for virtual Sunday and week-day services. After the services have been live-streamed they are available at any time. Just click on the link to join

Rev Nicky: <https://www.facebook.com/mwwpbenefice>

Rev Nicky Harvey was seconded by Archdeacon Julie Conalty to the Benefice of Mereworth, Wateringbury and West Peckham from Hadlow where she had been serving as Curate in June for three months. Rev Nicky has been appointed as Vicar of Marden and takes up her new role in September. The parish greatly appreciates

the help Nicky has so willingly extended to us, particularly the advice and practical support she has given in re-opening the church for Sunday worship. We send her our love and prayers as she embarks on her new post.

Search for a new vicar for the Benefice The initial advertisement for a new vicar sadly attracted no applicants. On the advice of the Archdeacon the position has been readvertised with a closing date of 21st August (after Rostrum's print deadline). Hopefully there will be more positive news in the October edition of Rostrum.

A VIEW FROM THE PEWS

Life upended, holding fast and friendship

Settled plans have become a luxury. You think you're going on holiday, then you're not, or you were on holiday and you had to dash back. You thought your home budget was just about ok for the year ahead and then it was just all over the place. You were revising for a set of exams, then they got cancelled. Weddings all set and ready to go - then off the cards. Businesses that were in good shape suddenly upended. The one thing you can predict is that things are unpredictable.

As creatures we like to have our habitual patterns of what's what. We don't like unexpected surprises about the things that matter most. It's natural to be that way. We want to know we have a roof over our heads, income to support us and those who rely on us, and a plan for getting by. Animals of our type form habits around the environment we expect to find ourselves in. That's why so many movies begin with things being fine, and then becoming completely unsettled. The rest of the movie is often an adventure to try to put things back.

For some, religion is a box of fixed certainties, with definitive answers to all questions. However, having faith, trusting in something, is really an idea that has an element of gamble about it. The trust you have for another person is only there because you cannot be sure. Total certainty leaves little room for faith.

If you ever open the Book of Psalms, what will jump out at you is the sheer diversity of human experiences this old hymn book reflects. From people at the end of their tether with the water rising up to their neck and higher (Psalm 61.9), desperate for help, to those who are expressing joyful and thankful celebrations for the good harvest and a God who can always be trusted. The ancient Israelites had the same range of experiences as us. Their expressions of trust are made in the face of unpredictability. In other words, to express such a faith is an act of will against the tumult of life.

It is like finding a sure foot when standing in the strong current of a wildly flowing river. This is proving to be a year for finding your footing and leaning against the wild river flow. When all around is unsettled and chaotic, you might just be able to stay upright. But even a strong will and a strong footing can falter. It can get too much. It's then that things like friendship, fellowship, companionship and partnership come into their own. We need 2020 as a year of friendship. If you are able to keep your footing, then look around you for someone who has slipped under. And if you feel yourself slipping under then reach out, and I hope and pray with all my heart you will find the grasp of a firm hand to pull you back up onto your feet.

God Bless. Bob

CHURCH THANK YOU



We are delighted that on 3rd August Yalding Forge installed a railing along the church path, a much needed aid for many negotiating the steep path.

Thanks go to the Mike Pursey Memorial Fund, the Parish Council and an

anonymous donor whose contributions helped the PCC to meet the cost.

Thank you to Ruth Dunn and all who contributed to the **Richard Dunn memorial fund**. Ruth was able to donate **£2000** to the church audio visual equipment fund and **£2000** to the School's classroom extension appeal. Both causes dear to Richard's heart.

Thank You to the Handy Stores and their customers who have raised **£370** from their small change donations tin on their counter for the Friends of Wateringbury Church funds.

Thank You to Wateringbury Players for their donation of **£500** to church funds from the proceeds of January's pantomime.

Thank You to Sheena and Gordon Self and David Merry who informally, and in line with lock-down regulations, sold various garden plants which raised **£308**.

Thank You to all who donate by standing order to general church funds. Your regular support greatly assists the PCC to budget accurately and this has been particularly important during these current unprecedented times when fundraising and cash collections have ceased and we do not know when/if 'normal' fundraising will be possible. If you would like to have an informal chat about donating by Standing Order please contact either Peter Bond 814793 or Liz Gummer 813852, our wardens.

School Foundation Governors Our village school has voluntary aided status and this gives our church strong links with the governing body and a duty to appoint Foundation governors. Three recent appointments mean there is now a full complement of Foundation Governors. Those serving as Foundation Governors are: PCC Appointments: Ruth Dunn, Kate Millar, Suzanne Rowlinson and Mike Witts (associate governor). Diocese appointments: Chris Clark, Alice Dunstall, Eleanor Sutton and Kimberly Salmons who has recently moved into Bow Road. She works in Tunbridge Wells as a primary school teacher specialising in music.