



Next Editors: Stephen & Kate Banks: huntonherald@outlook.com
All items for the next edition of the Herald to the Editors by 15th May

Plants, Produce & Refreshments: 10th May, 12 noon - 4pm

Come along for a wonderful afternoon at Hunton Club, where you'll find a fantastic selection of house and garden plants, including vegetables and herbs, all kindly donated by our wonderful community.

But that's not all! You can also browse and buy delicious local produce, such as rhubarb, homemade chutney, marmalade, jams, and honey.

Feeling peckish? Our bar will be open, serving local real ale and a variety of drinks, while our refreshments tables will be offering freshly made toasties, teas, coffees, and irresistible homemade cakes. Eat in and enjoy the atmosphere or take some treats home!

We're still welcoming more donations so if you'd like to contribute, volunteers will be accepting drop offs at the club on Friday, 9th May between 4 and 6pm. Or you can contact Lesley to set up an alternative arrangement. lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com

Don't miss this great opportunity to support your local community, grab some bargains, and enjoy a relaxing afternoon. Getting here: Please bring cash if you can, and park at the Village Hall, then enjoy a lovely short stroll down the footpath to the club.

We look forward to seeing you.

Hunton Annual Parish Council Meeting – Monday, 19th May

All residents are invited to attend the meeting, to find out what is happening in the Hunton community or raise any issues. The meeting will take place at 7.30pm in the village hall, with light refreshments served from 7pm.

We are delighted to welcome back Ray Morris from Marden Wildlife, who will be giving a talk on the fantastic work the group undertakes to conserve wildlife.

You can raise issues in the open session or ask your Parish, Borough and County Councillors any questions you may have. Hunton's many local groups and clubs will also be presenting short reports on their activities over the last year.

Church Working Party: Saturday, 17th May

Thanks to volunteers who, at the April Working Party, prepared St Mary's for Easter and split clumps of snowdrops. Even an hour of your help will be welcomed at the next Working Party on Saturday, 17th May between 9am and 12 noon. As usual, there will be free tea, coffee & cakes and a chance to chat at a break at about 11am. Please let Lesley know if you hope to take part so she can take enough supplies for the break. lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The meeting will be held on Sunday, May 18th starting at 9.30 am and will be held within the service of Morning Prayer. This is the annual meeting when reports for the year ending 31st December 2024 are published, the Financial Statement received and the PCC members elected for the next year.

Your Local Contacts:		
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Maidstone Police 690690 or 101
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Village Hall Booking: www.huntonvillagehall.co.uk
Pond and Tree Warden: Sam Andrews	huntontreewarden@gmail.com	Huntonwatch: huntonwatch@gmail.com 07907 019996
Rector: Revd. Lorna Faulkner*	747570	'Potholes' Hotline (KCC) 03000 418181
Hon Associate Rector: Revd. David Jones	741474	Hunton Ladies: Chris Summersgill c.a.summersgill@btinternet.com
Churchwarden: Iain Simmons	820875	Katie Lam MP katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk
	ishuntonchurchwarden@btinternet.com	Assistant to MP Katie Lam 020 7219 8175
Community Wardens Team	07811 271021	Village Club: Roger Lee: roger.c.lee@btinternet.com 820210
Hunton Bell Ringers: Lavinia Thompson	07885 763071	Reporting HGVs huntontrafficreporting@gmail.com
Contact details for other village clubs and organisations are available at www.huntonparishcouncil.org.uk		

Parish Council Contacts	
Parish Clerk: Sharon Goodwin - 681238, clerk@huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk	Chairman: David Heaton - 820678, dhhuntonpc@gmail.com
Cllr Tony Stanbridge - 820721, tshuntonpc@gmail.com	Cllr Annette Trought - 820448, annette@trought.com
Cllr Mike Summersgill - 820429, mshuntonpc@btinternet.com	Cllr Iain Simmons - 820875, isimmons@huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk
Cllr Simon Webb - 07878 018997, simon.webb5@btinternet.com	

Diary Dates	
4 th May, VE Special Church Service 9.30am;	10 th May, Plants & Produce Sale;
17 th May, Church Working Party	19 th May, Annual Parish Council Meeting
28 th -29 th June, Singing for All;	June, Quiz Night TBC;
18 th October, Harvest Supper TBC;	19 th October, Harvest Festival.
Check out www.huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk/events-list for the latest events. If you would like to add an event, email clerk@huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk	



Pastoral Letter

I have found this month's letter almost impossible to write. I sat down a couple of weeks ago to make a start and stared at a blank page for an hour. And I have done the same today, a day before the printer's deadline arrives.

Today, I feel like I have done nothing. I am frustrated and a little disappointed. But as I sit here writing this evening, I look back over my day and see that's not true.

I answered my emails, caught up on my phone messages and updated my schedule on the whiteboard in my office. I spoke to a lovely lady about laying her mother to rest. I tidied a couple of rooms then did some filing. I did a little outstanding paperwork. I decorated my son's 18th birthday cake, wrapped some presents, and hosted a small family gathering. I emptied and re-loaded the dishwasher. I printed out some orders of service. I walked the dog and did a couple of loads of washing. I feel like I did nothing because I was struggling to write the pastoral letter. But, in reality, I had quite a busy day!

As I sit and reflect on my day, I realise that, so often, we judge ourselves harshly. We see only what we did not do, rather than acknowledge the entirety of the life we have lived that day.

I felt I was a failure today because I didn't do one of the things on my list. But, when I look at all the things I *did* do, is it fair to call my day a waste? There is a practice in contemplative prayer called the 'Examen'. The general idea is that, before the day ends, you take a gentle walk in your mind back through the day just passed; noticing where God felt present, the moments you are grateful for; where you feel things went awry, the moments of regret perhaps; ask God to be in the day to come...

Life is not always as we plan or expect it to be. But we continue to live it. Jonathan Swift's words are an encouragement to us:

'May you live every day of your life'.

No part of our life is a waste. It is all there to be lived.

May we be a little more willing to allow ourselves to be glad for that which we have done as well as mindful of that which, as yet, has gone undone.

May we notice all the moments of our day and not just the ones we count as successful.

May we all be a little kinder to ourselves.

May God bless you in whatever you do, or don't do, today.

Lorna

Marden Farm Visit: Wednesday, 28th May 4pm

Following his talk to members of Hunton Gardening Club in February, Peter Hall invited us to join him to see some of the many projects he is running at his farms in Marden. These include management of the land in order to mitigate flooding in our area and a range of wildlife initiatives. Members of Hunton Gardening Club have quickly signed up to go on this tour but there are a few spaces remaining. If you would like more information about Peter's farms look at www.hehall.co.uk. If you would like to join the tour contact Lesley – lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com

Gardening in May

Keep tying in climbers that are putting on growth. Clematis in particular are impossible to extricate once they have reached out to other plants before you have managed to get there.

Start staking tall growing perennials, they never quite look as good if you have had to pick them up if they have flopped over and the flower heads are facing the ground.

Keep dead heading spring bulbs to allow the energy back into the leaves and so to the bulb rather than allowing them to set seed.

In the kitchen garden it is time to plant out and sow runner beans, sweet corn, leeks, courgettes and squashes and to keep earthing up the potatoes.

Start planting out the tender perennials at the end of the month and think about taking softwood cuttings from non-flowering shoots to increase your stock for next year.

Cut back early flowering shrubs but be mindful that dense shrubs may be used for birds that might be nesting, leave them alone until the birds have finished nesting.

Think about wildlife including insects and if you are able, leave a small area of lawn unmown in order for it to flower and provide pollen and nectar and for insects to retreat to.

That said...we never know what the weather is going to throw at us so be ready to protect the tender plants should a frost be forecast. Don't forget to pot on anything spare for the Plant and Produce Sale on Saturday 10th May.

Sue Heaton

Who'd be a Volunteer Street Cleaner?

Having arranged another litter picking day (or week as it has now become) the rain held off and at least 80 large black sacks of litter were collected from our roads and hedgerows (this excludes some rubbish that makes its way into general waste bins). This was a huge effort by those involved and a significant increase on the 45 bags the same week last year. Thank you all.

Also, thank you to those who drive past us with consideration while we are litter picking and to Clock House Farm who take away the rubbish we collect— we couldn't do it without you.

Sadly, for me, I found no more £20 notes this time, but some noteworthy patterns of behaviour were spotted. Red Bull, coke and beer cans were common throughout the village, but Barn Hill had a particularly large collection of vodka bottles! Amsbury Road upgraded their rubbish to Gin and Tonic cans and a layby with lots of empty drug packets and three pairs of tights! The imagination boggles.

A shrew climbing out of a wheelbarrow full of rubbish bags provided a lighter moment to offset the fact that someone, we assume just the one person, has 6 times thrown out bags full of dirty nappies, potato peelings, Bic razors and general food waste. These are not easy or safe to clear up so, if you are that person, please dispose of them with your own household rubbish.

James Forster

80th Anniversary of VE Day

The VE Day anniversary will be marked in Hunton with a special service of hymns readings and prayers in St Mary's Church on Sunday, May 4th at 9.30 am. All are welcome and following the service there will be refreshments.

There will also be VE decorations at Hunton Village Club. The mini makeover is not only a tribute to the sacrifices made during the war but also a celebration of the collaboration spirit and unity in our village.

A personal letter

Lying in bed, one does not expect to hear a letter written more than 80 years ago by one's father, read on national radio. But that is what happened to Guy Oliver, 81, recently when he was listening to the Today programme... The letter, part of which follows, had been written to Guy in 1945. It was read on the radio to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day which is on May 8.

"This letter is written for a very special occasion – your first birthday. When you received it, your father had never yet seen you because you were born while he was away in Italy fighting in the war. Your mother had to carry on during that time with all the worry and responsibility attached to bringing up a baby and at the same time managing a home and the money, things which in the ordinary way we should have shared together. You see Guy, you will read about this war, as history and history might not say quite what we knew at the time. I think it can be summed up in one phrase "Peace and quietness at any price".

But there were two governments of other countries who were aggressive and kept demanding things from small nations it wasn't in our power to give; we couldn't give away other people's things, but that is just what we did do to our shame. When we woke up at last we had to go to war to stop further demands. I am telling you all this because I want you to know two things. First never try and appease a bully, it just doesn't work. If anyone bullies you stand up to him and give as good as he does or better. You will find he will leave you alone in future. Of course with that, never bully anyone yourself. Secondly if ever you find yourself getting slack or your country try and do something about it. A few earnest souls can do quite a lot as you will find out when you read the history of this war and the Battle of Britain. It will be hard to realise quite what your mother suffered during that time, the worry and anxiety, the constant separation. All I can say is you have the best mother in the world, you will never know quite how good she is because when she carried on alone you were young and helpless. My mother did the same when your grandfather was away at war but I was old enough to remember and I can now appreciate what she did.

Your mother and I have found that love and truth and honesty with each other are the only real things that matter. You will be taught that and hear others sneer and scoff at them. Don't believe the scoffers Guy because they are wrong, and you will never find such people happy, as we are

Good luck and all my love, Dad"



Chicken Farm Refusal

The proposed chicken farm on Reed Court Farm in Chainhurst has been refused by Maidstone Borough Council.

The proposal by Fridays/DHA for three large sheds and 192,000 free-range chickens on land adjacent to the only clay-catchment river SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) in England had been submitted in 2020, re-designed several times and reduced to two sheds in 2023 - for which MBC Planners had proposed Approval in February 2024. It was only then withdrawn from Committee consideration after a Councillor vote (with residents in the Hall).

The WeLoveChainhurst (WLC) residents' group had been about to submit their THIRD Barrister's opinion on the FIFTH set of design submissions by Fridays/DHA (at substantial cost over the years for local residents and supporters), citing again the technical reasons on flooding, traffic and environmental issues as to why the modified Application should be dismissed.

The Decision Notice made public by MBC on March 14th may of course be appealed by Fridays anytime in the next six months, but documents made public at the same time showed that a SIXTH design had then been submitted by DHA, which changed the orientation and location of the eastern shed for a third time, and brought all the 2m+ high range fencing in closer to the sheds and off the flood plain, thus further reducing the scope/capacity for free-ranging of chickens (and presumably limiting flock numbers down to nearer 100,000 chickens, but still adjacent to a 'failing' SSSI river).

The MBC Decision notice (which can be found on MBC's planning portal, under PlanAp number 20/505751/EIFUL) gave 5 reasons why the submission, in its latest modified form, did not comply with relevant Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, being pollution from manure and from aerial ammonia, a missing landscape/visual assessment, the flood risk from engineering works in the flood plain, and assessment of off-site pollution risks.

The trigger seems to have been an objection raised only recently by the Environment Agency, after four years of them signalling agreement to the various previous proposals to MBC, and refusing to liaise with objectors on any technical grounds despite emails to them.

Hopefully the River Beult is safer (for now) from further deterioration from chicken farms' emissions, as seen on the Wye and Severn. Sadly, there is a new 'planning' spectre on the horizon, with treated sewerage from a new town of over 5000 houses south of Ashford being planned to be pumped into the Beult headwaters rather than into the River Stour catchment in which the Chilmington development is topographically situated... Ashford Council planners rejected this proposal on environmental grounds, sustained an Appeal by the Developer against that rejection, but the Government Inspector has over-ruled them!

Mike Summersgill, Hunton Flood/Pond Warden and Ward/Parish Councillor

Hunton Village Club Opening Hours

Wednesdays 8 – 11pm; Fridays 6.30 – 10.30pm; Sundays 8 – 10.30pm

A Relaxing & Creative Success: Mother's Day Acrylic Art Workshop at Hunton Village Club

The Mother's Day Acrylic Art Workshop hosted by Kerry Larkin at Hunton Village Club was a wonderful celebration of creativity, connection, and relaxation. Attendees embraced the calming nature of painting, finding joy not only in creating their own beautiful artwork but also in the wellbeing benefits that come with art related projects.

Art is known to reduce stress, boost mood, and enhance mindfulness, and this workshop was no exception. The calming process of painting with acrylics, blending colours, and engaging with others, allowed everyone to unwind and leave with a sense of accomplishment. It was a perfect way to escape the hustle and bustle of daily life and indulge in a couple hours of creative self-care as a special Mother's Day treat.

Set in the welcoming and versatile Hunton Village Club, the venue itself played a key role in the workshop's success. As a multi-use space in the heart of the community, the club continues to be fantastic hub for social, creative, and recreational activities.

Intentionally small in numbers, workshops like these help bring people together, whether from Hunton itself or from the neighbouring areas.

If you missed out, don't worry—there will be more workshops on the horizon! To find out more, follow 'Kreated by Kerry' on Facebook or contact Kerry at kerryanicholls1@aol.com. Keep an eye out on the Hunton FB page too.

Hunton Ladies Meet an Author

At the March meeting of the Hunton Ladies Group author Kate Merrin recalled how she got her book, *The Ties That Bind*, written and published. Several ladies had read and enjoyed the book, although it dealt with the difficult subject of supporting an elderly parent through her final years including dementia. This was based on Kate's own experiences of how she and her sister negotiated this difficult period with humour and the occasional glass of wine.

Hunton Ladies Group meetings are held on the last Wednesday of the month at Hunton Club commencing at 8 pm. New ladies are always welcome.

Chris Summersgill

Paul Parnell

It is with sadness that we write of the news that Paul Parnell passed away peacefully, surrounded by those closest to him, on Sunday 23rd March. Despite being ill for a long time, he remained resilient, endeavouring to be positive in all that he did. On 17th April his cremation was attended by over 400 family and friends, some travelling hundreds of miles to be there.

Paul will be remembered as a kind and generous family man. He was very amusing and made friends easily, he worked hard and enjoyed an active outdoor life... and the occasional drink! His three sons arrived on his prized Massey Ferguson tractor, pulling a trailer that was beautifully decorated with floral tributes and carrying the coffin. It was a day for his family to remember with pride.

Bell Ringers needed

Is bell ringing easy? No, but it's not hard either. Do you need muscles and have to be terribly fit? No, you don't but it may keep both your body and mind healthy. Is it social? Not always when ringing but most towers go to the pub afterwards, as it can be a thirsty hobby! Each bell tower is different. For example, ground floor ringing, a ringing chamber up in the tower, and bells can be on roller bearings. Those at St Mary's Hunton, rehung in 1900, are on plain bearings and require a little more effort. Ropes are long or short depending on the distance between the ringing floor and the bells; requiring an adjustment to ringing technique. So, can anyone ring? Probably, the lowest age is secondary school age and there is no upper age. In our band the youngest is 15 yrs and the oldest are in their 80's. Does it take long to learn? The general rule is that the younger you are the quicker you learn to ring a bell safely, that can take a month or so. Then, the future is up to you. So, why not try it? We practise on a Wednesday from 7pm to 8.30pm. We rotate, with the 1st Wednesday at Hunton, the 2nd Wednesday at Linton. The 3rd Wednesday we go to East Farleigh. The 4th and 5th Wednesdays are at Boughton Monchelsea. We ring on Sundays in the various churches. Contact the Tower Captain for details or simply turn up. We would love to see you.

David Jones

A Floral Arrangement

A concert to mark the opening of the Yalding Church Flower Festival will be held in Yalding Church on Friday, June 27th at 7 pm.

Benefice Service Rota – May 2025				
Church	4th	11th	18th	25th
Coxheath 11:00 am	Communion + APCM LF	Morning Worship + Baptism LF + BP	Communion DJ	All-age worship LF/BP
East Farleigh 9:30 am	Communion LF		Morning Worship BP	
West Farleigh 9:30 am		Communion DJ		Morning Worship SE
Hunton 9:30 am	Morning Worship- VE DAY DJ		Family service + APCM LF	
Linton 9:30 am		Morning Worship LF		Communion DJ
LF -Lorna Faulkner, DJ – David Jones, BP- Becky Parnham, CD -Clinton Davis, SE – Sue Elliott				
Midweek Services				
Coxheath - Every Thursday; Holy Communion, 10:00 am; Linton - Holy Communion last Wednesday of each month, 12.00 followed by soup				

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