



Editors: Sue & David Heaton, 3 New Cottages, Barn Hill, Hunton, ME15 0QT 01622 820678 herald@hunton.org.uk

Thieves and Vandals strike again

Thieves who ripped Kentish peg tiles off the roof of the lych gate entrance to the centuries-old St Mary's Church, Hunton, are believed to have struck again in the parish.

Village policeman Gary Shaw reports that it was probably the same gang who have since stolen 100 peg tiles from Amesbury Farm. This was one of four crimes over the past couple of months reported to the Parish Council by PC Shaw.

There had been an attempted burglary at Buston Manor but the would-be intruders were disturbed. Premises at Hilltop were entered and nothing taken while a tractor was stolen from a garage.

The officer further informed councillors that he would be keeping a watch on the King George playing fields area after it was reported that damage had been caused by joy riders driving round and round the car park.

Village Hall plans £8000 extension

An £8000 extension is to be made to Hunton village hall. The new storage area is needed for heavy equipment such as the stage, tables, chairs and other items currently stored in a roof space and at the rear of the building.

"The stage is really heavy and has to be brought down a ladder from the upstairs space and this obviously poses a health and safety risk every time an event is organised," said the hall chairman, Alan Bishop.

Plans are being submitted to the authorities for the proposed addition at the front of the hall on the side nearest the village, in preference to an initial scheme for a temporary extension on the opposite side of the building.

Parish Council Chairman, Roger Sawtell praised Mr Bishop saying that he had pressed ahead stressing the need for a permanent structure. "Alan stuck to his guns despite others favouring temporary plans - and at the same time gave himself a great deal of work!"

Mr Bishop revealed the Hall Committee had received a £1200 grant towards the extension work to the hall from the Borough Councillors. He thanked them for their contributions and said the committee would be looking for further funding.

Kent County Councillor, Paulina Stockell, suggested the Hall Committee should apply to the KCC local board. "They have come to the end of their financial year so new money is coming in and this work will benefit the community."

Alan further reported that the hall have a number of bookings and is doing well but further work, such as sanding the floor and improvements to the sewage system still needs to be carried out. This work will cost around £2000.

Hunton Book Group launch

Tricia reports that the first meeting was a great success. We been advised to limit the numbers to twelve and already 10 members have joined the group.

The first book is aptly named "The Reading Group" by Elizabeth Noble. It is reputed to be an easy read and will be discussed at the next meeting in April.

Meetings will be held on the first Thursday of every month at 8.00 pm at the Hunton Club. If anyone wishes to join please ring Tricia on 820804.

Your Local Contacts:

Parish Council Chairman: Roger Sawtell	820731	Village Club: Doug Redfarn	820495
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Clerk to Parish Council: David Swan	814445
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Village Hall Booking: Jackie Crooks	820226
Maidstone Police:	608186	Under-5s Playgroup:	741951
Pond and Tree Warden: Anne Bishop	820683	Pre-School Supervisor: Pippa Fordham	746829
Rector: Revd Peter Walker	747570	Neighbourhood Watch:	608173
Associate Rector: Revd Ruth Bierbaum	743866*	'Potholes' concern (MBC): Adrian Hygate	0845 824 7800
also: Revd David Jones	741474*	Churchwarden: Alison Ellman-Brown	820288
Hon PCC Secretary: Nicky Grainger	815458	supported by Joy McLoughlin	820551
		Organist: Philip Moore	749356

*not available on Fridays

Dates for Diaries:

Wednesday 12th April - Committee meeting for the King George V Playing Field, 8pm Village Hall, members of the public welcome

Saturday 22nd April - Council Freighter Visit , 07.45am to 08.45am Village Hall car park.

Sunday 21st May - Hunton School May Fayre 11.30am - 3.30pm

All items for the May issue to the Editors as soon as possible, and by 15th April, please

Dear Friends

'If Christ is not raised, our preaching, our faith is in vain' 1 Corinthians 15:16f)

The message of the first Easter Day is that Christ could not be contained by the tomb, that death could not contain him, and through the mighty power of God, Jesus is alive today!

The Hymn writer penned the words:

'For Judah's lion burst his chains, and crushed the serpent's head'

If Christ did not do this we are indeed a people to be pitied, for all we do is in vain. But we do believe that Judah's lion did burst his chains, so that we are, as one Pope put it: 'an Easter People'.

Easter People are not people who just remember some historic event over 2,000 years ago. Such people are those for whom every day, not just Easter Day, has a new meaning; Easter is an ongoing event, it has to be, for it is a constant re-affirmation of the Resurrection of Jesus, the Saviour of the world. This is not just some hazy notion in the mind to which we make some sort of mental affirmation.

Resurrection happens all around us. The very routine of life heralds resurrection in such ways that we may hardly be aware of its creative power. The artist begins quite empty, but then in a moment of inspiration a new work of art takes shape. The scientist proposes a new theory, and upon finding that unworkable, seeks out a further theory, and so on until a theory becomes fact. The husband and wife who find life so predictable, so ordinary, so lack-lustre, suddenly come upon a new, deeper and stable quality of life. These are all in a sense 'resurrection'. In one way or another, resurrection encompasses all that we do, all that we are. The hand of the mighty God is upon all things – for we are His Creation. All that we do has been because of His gifts to us in creating us.

A confident faith based upon the Cross of Calvary and the events of the first Easter Day and confirmed by the action of the Holy Spirit in us, is a faith that sees the Lord at work in everyday situations. Christian faith is not something to be acknowledged solely through church attendance on a Sunday morning. Faith in Jesus the Resurrected One is associated with encountering divine intervention in the ordinary, everyday demands of life.

It is an unthinkable supposition that a life so apparently ordinary, and such a commonplace death on a cross, could have been preached as a Gospel (Good News), and proclaimed by a few poor folk; that it had any weight of witness, unless these poor folk had been changed by a living faith. The might of Rome and the intellect of Greece would have soon shaken their experience, destroyed it. No, their lives were changed, they were indeed 'Easter People'. Are we?

Christian belief in the living Jesus today is more than just a belief in his survival after death. It is a belief that the serpent's head (the devil) has been crushed, the new Adam has come and that through the death of Jesus, eternal love has been revealed, which His resurrection revealed to be eternal life.

With love and prayers for a Holy Easter

Peter

Pre School Project: Learning Through Landscape

Hunton and Linton's 'Under Fives' Pre-School is looking for funding to back a 'Learning Through Landscape' project in an outside space at the rear of Hunton village hall. Julia Eley, a committee member of the pre-school, has written to the Parish Council explaining: "We intend to develop the project under our chosen option of 'creating growing areas outdoors.' We are planning a sensory garden using colour, texture; scent, taste and smell with a linked theme of reduce, re-use and recycle.

"All of this would have been sited where we have developed a small amount of garden area in a space currently dominated by a long-awaited shed. Now we will probably have to use this area for our existing playhouse which will be moved to make way for a proposed hall storage area extension." At the rear of the hall, however, is a sizeable and overgrown area of land which includes the septic tank. It is my suggestion that we apply to the Hall Committee to allow us to develop this unused area for the pre-school's garden project. "It would be transformed from an unsightly area of brambles and stinging nettles to a colourful and productive outdoor space available to be enjoyed by not only the pre-school but anyone who happens to hire the hall for functions."

The pre-school group has received £400 sponsorship to take part in the project. However it is likely to cost more and although another £200 can probably be made from fund-raising, the group is looking for further funding from Maidstone Borough Council, the Parish Council and any other bodies.

The Hall Committee has been approached; Julia said the response was very positive with minor adjustments to the plan. The pre-school helpers plan a site clearing party for Saturday 1st April.

Out and Out: A Regular Walk

Each month I walk a quarter of a mile along a short stretch of West Street to deliver the Hunton Herald. At the beginning of last year, just like now, I observed the hazel catkins lengthen and dangle golden in the wind. With the fresh spring growth and the earliest of the spring flowers appearing, I wondered how many different flowers grew along my walk. Over the four month period from March to July I counted 87 different species, after which no new species were identified. There is considerable satisfaction to be had in naming the flowers you see and in doing so your eyes notice more. You also notice the life-cycle of the plants: the flush of green leaves in spring; the flowering, the fruiting, the dying down in the dry months of July and August; and for some a second flush in late September before frosts knock them back. If you have a regular walk, how many different flowers can you identify? A list of my 87 species is available at www.hunton.org.uk/gardens

David Newman

Pupils go 'Outward Bound' and experience Indian Culture

In February, 16 Year 5 and Year 6 children from Hunton School went on a school journey with two teachers and the Chair of Governors to an outward bound centre in Rochester.

The children had a wonderful time! They stretched themselves in every activity they took part in from archery to capsizing a kayak, to climbing 22 feet up a telegraph pole and leaping from a trapeze! Follow up work and a special assembly for parents saw the children explaining their excitement and sense of success with each new experience they had enjoyed. Even a teacher and the Chair of Governors were seen rock climbing and leaping from high ropes. Meanwhile, back at Hunton School, the rest of the children and staff were busy learning about Indian culture with visitors teaching the children Indian dancing, cookery, and how to wear a sari. At Hunton School we encourage the children to embrace new experiences and develop a growing knowledge of other cultures as this helps young people to be more aware of their own lives and potential, and those of others.

Housing Development Alarm: Hunton Parish Council first to voice fears

Hunton was a leader amongst seven Parish Councils from the area expressing alarm over housing and other developments which are leading to increased traffic through narrow country lanes causing damage to the highways and danger to residents.

An action group of councils including Coxheath, Loose, Teston, Tovil and Barming, met at East Farleigh where Hunton councillors Gary Thomas and Lorraine Redfarn stressed villagers' fears.

Issues discussed included 'building development by stealth' - what appeared at first glance to be infill but became a major estate, often in the countryside.

Neighbouring Coxheath was one village that had suffered and locals were alarmed at an upsurge of 'infill' with gardens and open spaces disappearing. Although outline planning permission was given for 97 homes on the former Linton Hospital site in Coxheath, it now seems likely that this could increase to 150. There's a further new project on the Boughton Monchelsea side of Linton crossroads. Tovil it was stated seems to be the target for a disproportionate amount of housing on so called 'brown field' sites with the existing massive estate on Tovil Hill and plans for a further 400 homes on one site and 200 on a former industrial estate by the river.

Maidstone Borough Council seems to have embraced the incentives to develop the housing stock by 11,000 over the next 10 years - 3000 above Government recommendations.

All these developments lead to more motorists on the roads and this can have an effect on Hunton, which is used as a short cut to other areas.

The seven councils are calling for urgent action with the need to develop a strategy to put across the 'local view' more forcibly, since the perception is that many local politicians have 'lost the plot.'

Local Chiropractic and Natural Therapy Centre

This centre newly moved to: 43 Stockett Lane, Coxheath, tel 01622 745178, invites you to an **Open Day on Saturday 22nd April 2006 12pm-5pm**. Presentations, products and taster sessions:- Chiropractic Massage, Homeopathy, Reflexology, Reiki, Health Kinesiology, ear candles, Indian Head Massage, Allergy and Intolerance Testing as well as weight management and nutrition

Worrying Parking - But no worse than other Schools

Parking by parents taking their children to and from Hunton church school is bad - but no worse than at other schools in the area. This is the view of Maidstone Borough Council highways officer, Charlie Reynolds, after visiting the site.

"We could place parking restrictions in West Street/Bishops Lane but this would only disperse the vehicles to park in Grove Lane or further down where the soft verges could become damaged," Mr Reynolds reported to Borough Councillor, Brian Mortimer.

"If they did park on the verges this could also be unsafe as there is no pavement and pedestrians could be forced into the road," he added.

Having seen photographs Mr Reynolds admitted that parking was often bad but noted that in general drivers were "careful and sensible - and the problems only arose for short periods on weekday mornings and afternoons."

Parents had in the past been warned by the police that if they parked badly and an accident occurred they could be prosecuted. Kent County Councillor, Paulina Stockell, said that another school in the area had solved its problems by constructing a 'drive in and drive out' system but was told there was not the space available to achieve this in Hunton.

Further suggestions that parents could either use a bus or park away from the school - possibly at the village hall - and walk to the entrance were not considered viable alternatives as there is not an adequate roadside footpath. Plans for such a path were first mooted many years ago but in the past difficulties had arisen as there were different owners for the strip of land needed for the improvements. An alternative might be to construct the footpath thereby narrowing the road.

At St Mary's Church in April

Notices	Services
Brass Cleaning: Andrea Forster Marion Leonard Flowers: 16 th April Easter Sunday – All helpers please <i>Donations are invited for Lilies to be arranged in Church at Easter.</i> <i>Please contact Sue Scott (820369) for details.</i> 23 rd April Mrs. Grainger 30 th April Mrs. Grainger (Hunton Benefice) Church Family Service Coffee Rota: 2nd April Lorraine Redfarn Marian Weston 7 th May Forster Family Hunton Sunday Club: Will not be meeting on 16 th April as it is Easter Sunday, but instead we have all been invited to St Nicholas Church, Linton for a 'Fun Afternoon' on Holy Saturday, April 15th, from 3.00pm until 5.00pm for an afternoon of activities, singing, stories and games. The usual meeting in May, normally held on the 3 rd Sunday of each month for children of primary school age from 5.15pm until 6.45pm also clashes with a village event at the school so plans are being made to fix another date. See Hunton Herald next month for details. For further information please contact David 741474	Sunday 2nd – 5th Sunday of Lent 11am Church Family Service Revd David Jones Reading: John 12 v 20 – 26 Sunday 9th – Palm Sunday 9.15am Holy Communion (1662) Revd Peter Walker Readings: I saiah 50 v 4 – 9a, Mark 14 v 1 – 15 & 47 Sunday 16th – Easter Day 11am Church Family Service and Holy Communion Revd Ruth Bierbaum Readings: Acts 10 v34 –43, 1 Corinthians 15 v 1-11, John 20 v1-18 Sunday 23rd – Second Sunday of Easter 11am Morning Prayer Readings: Acts 4 v23 –35, John 20 v19-31 Sunday 30th – Third Sunday of Easter 10.30 Holy Communion Benefice Service Revd R Bierbaum Readings: Acts 3 v 12 –19, Luke 24 v 36 - 48

Churches Together in Maidstone

Good Friday Procession of Witness from Maidstone Baptist Church starting at 10.30 am with an open air service outside Marks & Spencer Week Street, 'Fremlin Walk' at about 10.50 a.m. Speaker The Bishop of Maidstone, Bishop Graham Cray. Service led by the Salvation Army Band

<i>April</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>9th</i>	<i>13th</i>	<i>14th</i>	<i>16th</i>	<i>23rd</i>	<i>30th</i>
Coxheath	11.00 HC	9.15 MP			11.00 HC	11.00 CFS	10.30 HC Benefice Service at Hunton
E. Farleigh	9.15 HC	8.00 HC 10.30 MP	7.30pm HC Benefice Service		6.00 Sunrise Service 11.00 HC	8.00 HC 10.30 MP	
Linton	9.15 HC	8.00 HC 11.00 CFS			9.15 HC	9.15 HC	
W. Farleigh	8.00 HC	11.00 CFS		2.00pm Benefice Service	9.15 HC	11.00 MP	
10am every Thursday—Holy Communion (1662) at Coxheath HC: Holy Communion MP: Morning Prayer CFS: Church Family Service EA: Evening Alternative							

For Weddings, Thanksgivings, and Baptisms, please contact Revd David Jones (741474)