



Our Village School

Hunton CE Primary School is a Good School with Outstanding Features

Hunton School had an Ofsted inspection on 6th November 2008; the inspectors' report states that the school had improved well since the last inspection and good gains have been made in the quality of teaching and learning, which has led to better standards and achievements. The inspectors said that the children get off to a good start in the Reception class and quickly develop a love of school and learning. They reported that learning is interesting and fun, so that pupils achieve well. There is excellent care, guidance and support which very successfully promotes pupils' personal development and well-being, which is outstanding. Children are articulate and confident, and are exceptionally appreciative of all that the school offers.

If you would like to read a copy of the whole report, please notify the school or log onto the Ofsted website. A full church inspection was carried out on 2nd December; the results of this will be available next month.

Hunton School Christmas Fair and Pantomime

A big thank you to everyone who came to our recent Christmas Fair, we raised a total of £880 which will go towards the new classroom. Also a reminder that the school is putting on a professional pantomime "Jack and the Beanstalk" on Friday 30th January at 7pm, tickets are only £7.50 per adult and £5 per child from Dawn Dixon (820598). All profits will go directly to the school.



Large Snowdrop Display

After an interval of two years, Anke and David Way are to open their garden for charity at snowdrop time once more. The proceeds will benefit the range of charities supported by The National Gardens Scheme.

There will be over 100 kinds of Snowdrops on display at 'Southover', in Grove Lane, Hunton on:

Saturday 14th February 2009

11.00 am to 4.00 pm,

Entry £3.50, children free

Refreshments, snowdrops for sale

Proceeds for charity and NGS (National Garden Scheme)

Your Local Contacts:

Parish Council Chairman: Roger Sawtell	820731	Village Club: Doug Redfarn	820495
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Clerk to Parish Council: Vikki Stancombe	842782
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Village Hall Booking: Jane Crane	820127
Pre-School Supervisor: Nicola Julier	07972067110	Maidstone Police:	608186
Pond and Tree Warden: Anne Bishop	820683	Neighbourhood Watch:	608173
Rector: Revd Peter Walker	747570**	'Potholes' concern (KCC): Kim Hills	0845 824 7800
Associate Rector: Revd David Jones	741474*	Churchwarden: Alison Ellman-Brown	820288
		Organist: Philip Moore	749356
		PCSO Hannah Percival	07772226032

*not available on Fridays **not available on Mondays

Dates for Diaries:

Thursday 15th January, Hunton Parish Council meeting, 8pm, Village Hall
 Saturday 17th January, Council Freighter Service, Village Hall, 7.45-8.45am.
 Friday 30th January, Jack & the Beanstalk Pantomime, Hunton School, 7.00pm (820598)
 Saturday 14th February, Snowdrops, Southover, Grove Lane, 11am-4pm.
 Saturday 27th June, Hunton Village Fete

Parish Councillors contact details

Parish Council Chairman	
- Roger Sawtell	820731
Clerk to the Parish Council	
- Vikki Stancombe	842782
Cllr Les Leonard	820858
Cllr Moira Walter	745765
Cllr Gary Thomas	820691
Cllr David Heaton	820678
Cllr Keith Eatwell	745569
Cllr Ron Porter	820220

All items for the February edition to the Editors as soon as possible, and by 15th January, please

Dear fellow readers

Jesus said, 'A new commandment I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.' (St John 13 v 34)

As we begin a new year there is always that opportunity for a fresh start. The past year is now behind us, with perhaps all its problems, disappointments and fears, and a new year is open before us. We wish each other a 'Happy New Year' and this greeting is heartfelt to people we know for whom 2008 might have been difficult. But as the words come out I wonder if we really believe that next year will be any better and how can it be better?

As a teacher I used to see the excitement in pupils' faces as they came to the end of an exercise book and be offered a fresh one. The first page was always so fresh, no writing coming through from the previous page, no crossings out to remind us of work that we rushed or did badly, no comments from the teacher about 'bucking up our ideas' (today such comments would be frowned upon as not being positive). A fresh book, a fresh page meant a new beginning. And I know from experience that if I made a mistake on that first page or my writing was poor it could haunt me for the rest of the life of that book. So it is with a new year. We are promising ourselves that things will be different yet know that so quickly we forget and slip back into old ways that are familiar and comfortable.

Maybe this year we could try a different approach? Rather than setting tasks to be changed why not consider attitudes that need addressing. Could we approach situations with expectations, that rather than problems to be faced, they are opportunities to be grasped? Rather than thinking of the bother that people can cause us, to see them as challenges to be resolved? Jesus taught this approach and set an example when he said, 'Love one another' and in doing so we are reminded of the love that God has for each of us. I am sure that when people feel loved they can in return give out love. It won't work says someone! Well we can try and then when we look back on 2009 we might be surprised at the change! The simple things in life often work best!

May I wish you all every blessing during 2009 as you set out into the New Year with a fresh start?

Yours

David

HUNTON BOOK GROUP

NOVEMBER BOOK REVIEW - WATER FOR ELEPHANTS by SARA GRUEN

As the novel begins Jacob Jankowski is an old man in an assisted living home. His memories are sparked by a nearby visiting circus and a creeping helplessness that assaults his body.

As he falls into fitful dreams, the past emerges. Just before he is to sit his final veterinary exams at Cornell his parents die tragically. He finds himself without a home or a future and fails to sit the exams. Wanting to escape, Jacob jumps onto a passing train where he enters a world of freaks, drifters and misfits attached to a second rate circus struggling to survive the Great Depression, making one-night stand in town after town.

As a veterinary student who almost qualified, he is put in charge of caring for the circus menagerie. It is here that he meets and falls in love with Marlena, the beautiful young star of the equestrian act. He also meets her husband who is obsessively jealous and given to unspeakable cruelties toward man and animals. Jacob does his best to protect the animals from their harsh existence. This includes Rosie, an elephant who nobody could train, until one day he discovers a way to reach her.

The book triggered a lively discussion. We all agreed that it successfully addressed major issues such as old age, mental health and the depression. Also, that the author was extremely sensitive and researched thoroughly the feelings of elderly people and their frustrations. We enjoyed the way Jacob's story drifted from past to present and were touched by the sadness he felt when he found himself back in his ageing body living in the home.

We felt the writing was clever, that many of the description, both in the circus and in the home, were wonderful and brought the story alive. Most of the group agreed that the ending made them smile, but others thought it was unlikely. We all thoroughly enjoyed the book, but one member found the cruelty towards the animals unbearable and this spoilt it for her.

Scores for the book ranged from 5 to 9 with an average score of 8.

Our book for December is The Resurrectionists by James Bradley

Applause Event - The Martin Harley Band

Saturday 21 February at 8pm - Hunton Village Hall

The Martin Harley Band is a superb acoustic trio playing a contemporary blend of jazzy Americana and slide guitar driven blues. Martin Harley is an acoustic musician and songwriter who commands immediate attention. His evocative, soulful songs are hauntingly familiar with catchy melodies.

The band are terrific live performers and in the intimate surroundings of the village hall should not be missed.

www.martinharley.com

Tickets £8 or £4 for under 21's are available from Alan 820683 or Jane 820127.

Out and Out Get the Buzz

Bees are a vital part of a productive garden pollinating flowers of fruit and vegetables to ensure a good crop. In fact it is estimated that one third of the human food supply depends on insect pollination, most of which is accomplished by bees, especially the domesticated European honey bee. Bees however are in decline and need to be encouraged and provided for. What they need are ready sources of pollen and nectar over a long season from mid march to late August and now is a good time to plan to extend the season in your garden.

Early sources include daffodils, viburnum, hellebores, and aubretia. Late sources include asters, heather, ivy and sedum (see <http://www.gardenersworld.com/plants/features/plants-for-bees/> for details). For the time in between, almost any flowering plant will do but thymes, borage and clover are particular favourites. If you are ordering seeds look out for one or two which are particular favourites of bees and add these to your list.

It is not just honey bees which pollinate flowers, there is also a whole host of solitary bees which will do the job just as well, so these should also be welcomed into the garden and, if you are growing attractive plants, will undoubtedly find their own way there and give your garden a good buzz!

Christine McSweeney

Hunton History The Lost Bridge

Hunton has many historic and attractive buildings, from the mediaeval Church to the numerous cottages and farmhouses and back to the well proportioned Hunton Court. All these seem to blend into and enhance our landscape. The one structure that is missing is an attractive bridge over the River Beult. What we have today can only be described as a high walled functional crossing that takes you rapidly from Chainhurst to Hunton, letting what would be a fine view of the Beult valley go by in a blur.

This has not always been the case, as the present bridge only dates from the 1940's. Prior to that there existed a bridge that had almost certainly been of mediaeval origins, dating quite possibly from the early years of the thirteenth century (a very high proportion of mediaeval bridges date from the reign of King John). Even this bridge, in all probability, replaced earlier structures as this is a very ancient crossing point.

By the 1930's the old bridge was in a state of poor repair and was a mixture of mediaeval stonework, iron bracing, brick additions and iron railings - rustic but not unattractive. The course of the bridge over the stream was different from today's structure; being some 20 metres downstream of the present bridge on the Hunton bank. Furthermore, the course of the Beult divided into two, round an island of about half an acre: so that the structure consisted of a single span from the Hunton bank to a central section of three small arches on the downstream tip of the island, with a further single span to the Chainhurst bank, making a landfall next to the present road. The single river spans were only about one vehicle's width wide; the central island section acting as a passing place. The overall look and aspect of the bridge would have been similar to Herstfield Bridge over the Beult at the foot of Chart Hill.

The land that the Hunton bank approach road now occupies was the subject of a protracted sale in 1939-1940. It should have been easy as the land belonged to the Parish Council, however it appears there were restricted covenants attached which the Councillors had to appear before the Justices of the Peace in order to have revoked. The Council was, it seems, quite willing to sell the land as it would make all of £12 on the deal, not a fortune even then. The amusing part is that when the Clerk wrote to inform the Inland Revenue of the sale, for the purposes of paying two shillings tax, the Revenue replied saying that they had contacted the KCC who stated they knew nothing of the sale! The Clerk sent a rather grumpy reply stating that it had, and he had 40 to 50 letters relating to the sale to prove it.

The name Clapper Bridge is of interest: clapper is normally used as a term to describe a small bridge consisting of stone slabs resting on stone pillars: usually associated with the upland regions of western and northern England. It is more likely that the term clapper in this instance derives from a similar root as that used in Sussex to describe a raised footway alongside roads given to flooding, being from the Anglo-Saxon word 'cleaca'- stepping stones. It may be that our bridge derives its name from the long raised approaches on both banks raised above what would have been very wet meadows.

For those who are interested, the raised stone faced causeway is still visible on the downstream side of the Hunton bank beyond the pumping station.

David Heaton

The Rectors and their impact on Hunton and the Church

In 1803 the Reverend Robert Moore became Rector of Hunton. He was the second son of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and a very wealthy man. Some of his income came from sinicures; he held several positions at the same time. This was not uncommon; his predecessor Beilby Porteus had been Rector of Hunton as well as being Bishop of Chester, and he had the living of other Parishes too.

Reverend Porteus spent the summer at Hunton where he improved the Rectory on Barn Hill; he enlarged the house and laid out the gardens, regarding it as a "terrestrial paradise". In 1787 he left to become Bishop of London, leaving a bequest of £3,000 to found a school for the village.

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At St Mary's Church in January

Notices	Services
Coffee Rota: 7th January Sylvia Gurr and Moiora Ensoll Brass Cleaning Nicky Granger and Sylvia Gurr Flowers 4th January Mrs Scott 11th January Mrs Scott 18th January Mrs Way 25th January Mrs Way Hunton Sunday Club The January meeting will be held at Freeland's, West Street on Sunday January 18 th from 5.15pm to 6.45pm. A reminder that the Club is open to all children of primary school age either living or attending school in Hunton. For further information contact David Jones 01622 741474	Sunday 4th January - Christmas 2 11.00am Family Service Revd David Jones Readings: Preacher's choice Sunday 11th January - The Baptism of Christ 9.30am Holy Communion Revd Peter Walker Readings: Acts 19 v 1-7 and Mark 1 v 4-11 Sunday 18th January - Epiphany 2 11.00am Morning Prayer Readings: 1 Samuel 3 v 1-10 and John 1 v 43-51 Sunday 25th January - Conversion to St Paul Epiphany 3 Readings: Revelation 5 v 1-10 and Matthew 19 v 27 - 30 Sunday 1st February - Epiphany 4 11.00am Family Service Readings: Preacher's choice

The Reverend Moore, as well as Hunton where the salary was £500 a year, held two other livings. He was also a Residentiary Canon of Canterbury and was rumoured to have an income of more than £9,000 a year; but when he obtained another post, the Registrar of the Perogative Court of Canterbury, whose work was connected with wills, and where the work was all done by clerks in any case, complaints were made against his pluralism. In 1852 there was a letter in the Times; and when the clerk's pay was cut and Robert Moore refused to make up the difference - "he refused to give them a farthing", it was said more critical letters and a scathing poem appeared.

Anthony Trollope's book, The Warden, the first of the Barchester novels, deals with the same problem; Trollope calls "The Times", "The Jupiter", and in his story the Warden resigns; the Reverend Moore did not, he stayed at Hunton for 62 years, but he shared a little of his wealth with the village.

He presented the clock for the tower: this used to be wound every week by hand, which meant climbing an uneven spiral staircase; but the mechanism has now been electrified. He also gave the font, though the oak cover is recent, donated by Joyce Bartle in memory of her husband John, who had been Churchwarden and sang in the choir. Robert Moore also built the school, on East Street, adding money to the bequest in the Porteus Charity to provide two schoolrooms with a house and playgrounds and the salary of a school master and a school mistress.

It is thought that he also built Church Cottage, the little stone house in the corner of the church yard on the site of an older, thatched building that had been used as a poorhouse.

The Reverend Moore was followed in 1865 by Canon Hall. The second half of the 19th Century was a time of revival, both of church attendance and of interest in church building. We see new churches built at this time, Langley church is an example of the Gothic style so much favoured by the Victorians, not only for churches- they liked Gothic banks and Town Halls too.

Some medieval churches perhaps have been damaged by what is seen as Victorian heavy-handedness, but in this church it seemed that the alterations were sympathetic.

The carving on the Piscina (stone basin) and sedilia (stone seats) was well restored and the whole chancel was renovated. The feeling of the time, influenced by the Oxford Movement, was for more formality of worship and for greater colour and richness of decoration in the surroundings: this can be seen in the tiles of the chancel floor, the alabaster reredos (behind the altar), inlaid with mosaic lilies and the wrought-iron altar rail in the latest style.

The Rector, his family and friends gave the tiles, the chancel pews, the lectern and new oak pulpit. Other's generosity provided the reredos and the altar. The east window, Jacob's Dream by Alexander Gibbs, was given in memory of the Reverend Moore and his wife Dulcibella. This certainly has Art Nouveau influences, quite Burne-Jones like, much admired when the sun shines through during morning service.

In the nave the gallery was taken down and boarded ceiling was removed; the oak, probably box pews, were replaced by the present pine ones. In 1884 an extension was built to house the organ, and a year later the south aisle was lengthened to make the vestry, so by 1900 the church was structurally as we see it today.

Taken from Mary Johns notes from the talk Aug 2008

January	4th	11th	18th	25th
Coxheath	11.00 HC	9.30 MP	11.00 HC	11.00 FS
E. Farleigh	9.30 HC	8.00 HC 11.00 FS	9.30 HC	8.00 HC and 9.30 Matins
Linton	9.30 HC	9.30 HC	8.00 HC and 11.00 FS	9.30am HC
W. Farleigh	8.00am HC	11.00 Matins	9.30 HC	11.00 Matins
HC: Holy Communion, MP: Morning Prayer, (bcp) Book of Common Prayer, FS: Family Service, SW: Service of Word APCM Annual Parish Council Meeting				

For Weddings, Thanksgivings, and Baptisms, please contact Revd Peter Walker