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Pop in for a Ploughman's

In days of old, farmers working the fields around Hunton were served Ploughman's lunches prepared by their wives to sustain the workers on the land at lunchtimes and give them energy to complete a hard day's work.

Now memories of those days on the local farms are being revived at the Hunton Village Club where monthly Ploughman's lunches from 12pm to 2pm are being served with fresh bread from Lisa Halliday's bakery in West Street, Kentish cheeses and pickles. The first date for your diary is 22nd March.

Organiser Ann Sawtell agreed with Helen Ward's comment of last month: "Hunton has always been regarded as a nice place to live and in recent times has further developed into a thriving community. Now in an effort to bring everybody together on a regular basis, we are arranging these Ploughman's lunches."

"They will be preceded earlier in the day from 9am until 11am, by the Pop Up Shop, with coffee on sale, as previously staged at St Mary's Church, being arranged by Annette Trought fresh back from her festive holidays in the States."

The club will be open for a Saturday session from 12pm to 2pm, so that members can pop in for a drink, while enjoying bread and cheese.

Busy Year for Parish Council

Hunton Parish Council has voted to ask this year for the same precept as in 2013 from Maidstone Borough Council to cover running costs, resulting in a 26p rate increase per resident. The council, hoping that residents will be content with this decision, has outlined a series of projects completed in the past 12 months, in addition to the everyday operating costs to keep the parish in order.

After months of delays, due to indecision by the Kent County Council, the long-awaited footpath between Bensted Close and the Village Hall was opened in time for the summer fete.

A total upgrading of the play equipment on the King George playing fields was undertaken – it is hoped to provide new benches in 2014 - while the council is now receiving payback for reduced energy arising from the investment in the new solar panels for the Village Hall.

The council has played a key role in the Hunton Cricket Club application for a new pavilion to replace the ageing old one. It is hoped the bid will be successful to Sport England, which will totally fund the £60,000 cost.

Expenses incurred through the year include those for regular grass cutting for the cricket and football pitches, hedge cutting and waste bin emptying, as well as annual membership payments to various local and regional groups.

...and News from the January Meeting

Cllr Steve Wyles met Mrs Gibbs-Naguar, new Headteacher of Hunton Primary School and expressed the Council's wish for the school to become more involved in village events. They also discussed the problems caused by parking outside the school and in a bid to ease this situation, parents are being urged to park at the village hall with the aim of setting up a 'walking bus' for their children to the school but first the go-ahead is needed from the KEC who are carrying out a safety assessment. The Council is looking in to the possibility of parking restrictions, particularly opposite the Bishops Lane/Water Lane junction.

A village gateway is to be installed at the bottom of Hunton Hill as well as reflector posts on the verge alongside the playing field on West Street.

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Your Local Contacts:

Parish Council Chairman: Roger Sawtell

School: Secretary/Head Teacher

Under 5's Pre-School:

Pre-School Supervisor:

Pond and Tree Warden: Anne Bishop

Rector: Peter Callway

Non Stipendiary Minister Revd David Jones

Village Club: Doug Redfarn

820731

820360

820309

07972067110

820683

747570**

741474*

820495

Clerk to Parish Council: Sharon Goodwin

Village Hall Booking: Kathy Reid

Maidstone Police:

Neighbourhood Watch: huntonwatch@gmail.com

'Potholes' concern (KCC): Kim Hills

Churchwarden: Alison Ellman-Brown

PCSO Richard Chainey

Hunton Bell Ringers, Michael Webb

*not available on Fridays **not available on Mondays

681238

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608186

820403, 820429, 820731

0845 824 7800

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07989 992424

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Diary Dates

Saturday 1st February "The Runaways" Village Hall 7.30pm

Sunday 2nd February East Farleigh Farmers' Market 9am-12pm

Wednesday 12th February Parish Plan Meeting Village Club 8-9pm

Sunday 16th February Snowdrops at St Mary's Church 12-4pm

Saturday 1st March "Davis Lindley Mullen" Village Hall 7.30pm

Thursday 6th March Lent Lunches Village Club 12.30-2pm

Parish Councillors Contact Details

Parish Council Chairman – Roger Sawtell 820731

Clerk to the Parish Council – Sharon Goodwin 681238

Cllr Les Leonard 820858 Cllr Ron Porter 820220

Cllr David Heaton 820678 Cllr Tony Stanbridge 820761

Cllr Gary Thomas 820691 Cllr Steve Wyles 820403

Check out www.hunton.org.uk for changes and see the latest up- dated version.

If you would like to add an event to the village diary email huntondiary@btinternet.com

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

As I write this, we are preparing to travel to Goa to celebrate a significant birthday for my wife Alison which takes place in early February. Other significant dates during February include St. Valentine's Day and every four years an additional day: February 29th. Funny things, aren't they, dates? At some point in the past somebody decided what would be when; and we celebrate the turn of each year at midnight on December 31st but it is really only some arbitrary selection of what should happen when that has us singing Auld Lang Sine or letting off fireworks. We are now in the year AD 2014. AD stands for Anno Domini, Latin for "the year of our Lord" and of course somebody once decided that we would start the years again at the point of Jesus Christ's birth (or as close to it as they could work out – most scholars think that Jesus was born in about 6BC!). The secularisation of society means that this era is now known as the Common Era, or CE, and the time before the year zero is known as Before the Common Era, or BCE. I'll keep calling it BC and AD, thank you. (Come to that, I still prefer pounds and ounces!) Our current calendar is the Gregorian calendar, as determined by Pope Gregory in 1582 after advice from astronomers on how to repair the Julian calendar's lack of synchronisation with the Earth's orbit around the Sun, and so the Leap Year day became 29th February, which for some reason also has connections with romance as the day when it is permissible for young ladies to propose marriage to their young gentlemen.

Valentine's Day, (14th February as a reminder to our male readers!) when lovers and would-be lovers send each other cards and romantic gifts, is of course a commercial hijacking of the original feast day of St. Valentine. There were lots of early Christian martyrs called Valentine, and there are two who are celebrated on 14th February – Valentine of Rome and Valentine of Terni. Not many of us will be thinking of them come February 14th I suspect. It wasn't until the 14th century that romance came into the equation, courtesy of Geoffrey Chaucer's poem Parliament of Fowls. "For this was Saint Valentine's Day, when every bird cometh there to choose his mate." This poem was written to honour the first anniversary of the engagement of King Richard II of England to Anne of Bohemia and the rest, as they say, is history.

Hijacking Christian festivals for commercial gain is not uncommon (the Easter eggs are already in the supermarkets and Christmas decorations will likely be on sale in October) but the goings-on works both ways! The date for Christmas for example was probably chosen to replace the day for celebrating the Roman Sun God, and Easter Day is always the first Sunday after the Paschal Full Moon following the northern hemisphere's vernal equinox.

Long before Columbus sailed the ocean blue to discover the Americas, the Mayans had developed a calendar system known as the Long Count Calendar for measuring dates over periods greater than 52 years. This calendar started on the day they believed that their god created the world and ended on December 21st 2012. It measures 13 b'ak'tuns (period of 144,000 days) from the creation date. A b'ak'tun was an important period for the Mayans and they celebrated the transition from one to another with high expectation that something cosmic would happen. This has led to the suggestion (and in some circles expectation) that the world would end on that date. It didn't of course, and this is entirely down to a misunderstanding of the way that calendar works - but it's a great excuse to make a disaster movie or two.

The Bible, which Christians believe to be God's revealed word to us, tells us that this world will end only when God decides it will, and even then only after the Good News of Jesus Christ has been preached throughout the world. Even Jesus when he was on earth did not know the time appointed. And the ending of this world will usher in a new heaven and a new earth in which there will be no more pain or suffering and all will be made perfect. Now, that's a date to look forward to!

Many blessings,
Peter

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The Neighbourhood Watch scheme continues to grow with a current membership of 103 properties, around a third of the village. In recognition of its success it was awarded Maidstone and District Neighbourhood Watch of the Year 2013. After a Hunton newsletter appeal, two 4x4 owners have come forward to offer villagers help with shopping should they become snowed in. If anyone finds themselves in need of this help they can contact their local coordinator.

Three crimes have been reported in the village over the last two months: criminal damage to a garden statue, theft of heating oil from West Street and theft of a lawnmower from Water Lane. There has also been an increase in property break-ins in surrounding villages, with items such as laptops and phones being particularly targeted.

King George V Playing Field Committee Chairman, Danny Peacock, reported that the scheduled work to cut back the trees overhanging the football and cricket pitches can't be carried out at the moment as the ground is too wet. The poor condition of the car park remains a cause for concern. The cost of resurfacing is prohibitive but the committee is looking into more modest improvements.

Christina Harrison, new Village Hall Chairman, reported that current bookings are almost at capacity. Steps are being taken to remedy a number of items requiring repair or maintenance.

Coxheath Parish Council has expressed major concern about Maidstone Borough Council's proposal to designate Coxheath and Yalding as rural service centres in the local plan, giving the green light for additional housing, shops and industrial use. This would inevitably lead to a large increase in traffic using Hunton as a 'rat run' and the Council is to write to Maidstone Borough Council expressing strong opposition to the proposals.

The Return of the Pop Up Shop for 2014

The Pop Up Shop returns to Hunton with more dates this year. Our objectives are to support and promote local producers; provide an opportunity to buy artisan produce made on a small scale with quality ingredients and therefore not available in the supermarket; and provide another activity to add to our busy village's social calendar. We are excited to announce that our first outing for 2014 will be at the Village Club on **Saturday 22nd March 9 – 11am**. If all goes well we hope to use the Club on more occasions and link up with the Ploughman's lunch events organised by Ann Sawtell on Saturday lunchtimes at the Club too.

Dates and **preliminary** venues are as follows. We will keep the Village up to date via the Herald, website, email and Facebook. More next month.

Saturdays:

March 22 nd	Village Club	July 26 th	The Orchard
April 19 th	(Easter) St Mary's Church	Aug 23 rd	The Orchard
May 24 th	Hunton Bakery	Sept 27 th	Hunton Bakery
June 28 th	Village Club car park	Oct 25 th	Village Club

Annette

Music at the Village Hall

Saturday 1st March – Davis Lindley Mullan - Singer & Guitarist Andy Davis (Stackridge/Korgis) presents songs from his huge catalogue aided and abetted by fellow Stackridge musician, the "Scottish Firebrand" Clare Lindley (Violin/ Guitar/ Vocals) and Brian Mullan (Cello/Vocals). Expect heartfelt melodies, great musicianship, wry humour and even the odd Ukulele! Search for "DLM BABY GOOD FOR YOU" on YouTube. Doors open at 7:30pm with music starting at 8pm.

There is a licensed bar and cheese and biscuits during the interval.

Tickets £12 or £6 for under 18's and need to be pre-booked with Mike Summersgill on 01622 820429.

The Hunton

Pantomime

Jack and the Beanstalk.

April 10th, 11th & 12th.

Keep the date free.

Tickets on sale in March.

Further details next month.

Hunton Club Book Group Review

The Perfume by Patrick Suskind

The story starts on a very hot day in 18th century Paris when Grenouille is born amid a stinking pile of fish gut. With vivid descriptions of the smells in the poor areas of Paris it goes on to tell of the hard, friendless life of Grenouille, who becomes an orphan. He is different from other orphans in that he doesn't seem to need love or comfort and he can endure great hardships. He is unique in that he has no odour of his own, which means people often overlook him and certainly are not attracted to him. However, his own sense of smell is so remarkable that not only can he pick out a scent from miles away, but can also unravel each strand that makes it. Grenouille's life is completely dominated by smells and with his unique gift he gradually infiltrates the profession and becomes a master perfumier, meeting on the way some disreputable characters. However, it is not just wonderful perfumes he wants to make, but a scent that will make people love him and feel attracted to him. In order to create this scent he has to murder virgins at a certain time in their life. This is what makes the tale a chilling murder story.

The group were very divided in their feelings about this book. One member thought it was complete rubbish, another found it disturbing and too upsetting, but appreciated that it was well written. Others loved the descriptions and thought it was clever the way they were brought to life by the sense of smell, but also found it chilling especially the fact that Grenouille managed to be 'invisible' because he was odourless. Several agreed that it was a fascinating read and liked the gothic, Grimm Fairytale feel of the book, which somehow stopped it being too scary. It was generally agreed that the ending was disappointing.

Scores for this book ranged from 2 to 9 giving an average of 7.

Trees for Floods

A ground breaking study in Wales has shown the benefit trees can have in increasing the amount of rain water filtering into the ground, reducing the flow of water into water courses and thus reducing the risk of flooding. For those of us in Hunton who have watched helplessly as water levels have risen threateningly on two occasions over the last thirteen years, this study may offer a way to reduce the chances of flooding and improve our environment.

In the Welsh study (the Pontbren Project) sheep farmers planted shelterbelts of native deciduous trees and shrubs to make their stock more comfortable outside. The sheep were excluded from the planted area by stock fencing. It was not long before farmers noticed that water which normally ran down the hill and into rivers was disappearing as it ran through the planted areas. A ten year study showed that the trees increased the amount of water running into the ground (and so not straight into the river) by up to 67 times. It is the tree roots that cause the water to filter down into the soil. In Pontbren the farmers increased the tree cover on their farms from 1.5% to 5% without any loss of productivity.

Work continues to understand the full implications of this but I am encouraged to plant and cherish native trees and perhaps if others in Hunton and further afield do the same we might be making a difference to future flood threats.

For more information on the Pontbren Project see [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/CCpack_casestudy_Pontbren.pdf/\\$FILE/CCpack_casestudy_Pontbren.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/CCpack_casestudy_Pontbren.pdf/$FILE/CCpack_casestudy_Pontbren.pdf) or just put 'Pontbren Project' into your internet search engine.

Christine McSweeney

At St Mary's Church in February

Notices

Flowers – February

2nd Louise Ferns
9th Louise Ferns
16th Ruth Porter
23rd Ruth Porter

Sunday 2nd February – Presentation of Christ in the Temple

11.00am Family Service – Miss Chris Bostock

Readings: Preacher's choice

Sunday 9th February – Fourth Sunday before Lent

09.30am Holy Communion 1662 – Rev. David Jones

Readings: Isaiah 58.1-9a and Matthew 5.13-20

Sunday 16th February – Third Sunday before Lent

11.00am Morning Prayer – Rev. David Jones

Readings: Deuteronomy 30.15-20 and Matthew 5.21-37

Sunday 23rd February – Second Sunday before Lent

11.00am Holy Communion – Rev. Peter Callway

Readings: Genesis 1.1-2.3 and Matthew 6.25-34

Alternative Service

Saturday 15th February 10am-11am

Café Church in Holy Trinity, Coxheath

Do come and join us for this informal style of worship.

Contact Eileen 01622 204241 for more information.

Get Out and About in February

Get to an unusual event in Hunton on Sunday 16th February

One of the most charming harbingers of Spring are snowdrops and several kinds are to be seen in the churchyard. The Friends of St Mary's Church will be welcoming snowdrop visitors to both its churchyards which have a wealth of snowdrops in a charming setting. Open between midday and 4pm. Refreshments, information and displays. **Entrance free.**

Maidstone Wind Symphony Gala Concert

Saturday 15th February 7.30pm, All Saints Church, Maidstone

Featuring Huw Morgan (trumpet) and Tim Watson (saxophone).

Programme: Richard Wagner – Overture to The Flying Dutchman, Richard Rodney Bennett – Concerto for Trumpet and Wind Orchestra, Peter Meehan – Fenix Blue, Ferrer Ferran – Pinocchio Symphonic Suite.

Tickets £10 Adults, £8 Concessions, Children under 12 Free.

Available online www.maidstonewindsymphony.org or from 01732 366500 or Lisa on 01622 820344.

STOP PRESS:

East Farleigh Farmers' Market returns on Sunday February 2nd from 9am to 12 noon, fully stocked with your favourite goodies. Please come and support local producers of fine food and crafts in 2014. A Happy New Year to all customers from the stallholders and organisers!!

School News

The School had a visit from The Hawking Centre who brought along birds of prey to display to the children.

Borton class created and prepared games and activities that focused on developing good relationships and delivered an afternoon of creative events to pupils throughout the school.

Porteous class visited The British Museum in London and learnt all about mummification and The Pharaohs.

Devas Class learnt about the origins, manufacturing process and distribution of chocolate. The unit of study ended on a sweet note with a chocolate making party.

Health Help

The winter months are the busiest time for the NHS but people often only go to A&E because they are worried and are not sure what else to do. However, there is no need to go to A&E for most illnesses and injuries so to make it easier for people to find urgent help and advice when they need it, the West Kent NHS has issued the following guidance:

Contact your GP practice first

GPs are experts in everyday health problems

Call 111 (24 hour service) if:

- You need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- You think you need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service
- You don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call
- You need health information or reassurance about what to do next

Call 999 only in a life-threatening emergency

Your local pharmacy is also a good source of help and advice for minor ailments. Late night and Sunday pharmacies can be found at:

Maidstone – Medipharma 01622 750785, Morrisons 01622 661750, Link Pharmacy 01622 752990 (not open Sundays), Boots the Chemist 01622 690751. Aylesford – Sainsbury's 01622 701820. Larkfield – Tesco 01622 701449
Further advice can be found at www.healthhelpnow-nhs.net

February	2nd	9th	16th	23rd
Coxheath	11.00 HC	11.00 MP	11.00 HC	11.00 FS
E. Farleigh	09.30 MP	08.00 HC 11.00 FS	09.30 HC	08.00 HC
Linton	09.30 HC	9.30 FS	08.00 HC	09.30 HC
W. Farleigh	08.00 HC 1662	11.00 MP Mod	09.30 MP Trad	09.30 HC Mod
HC: Holy Communion, MP: Morning Prayer, (bcp) Book of Common Prayer, FS: Family Service, SW: Service of Word				