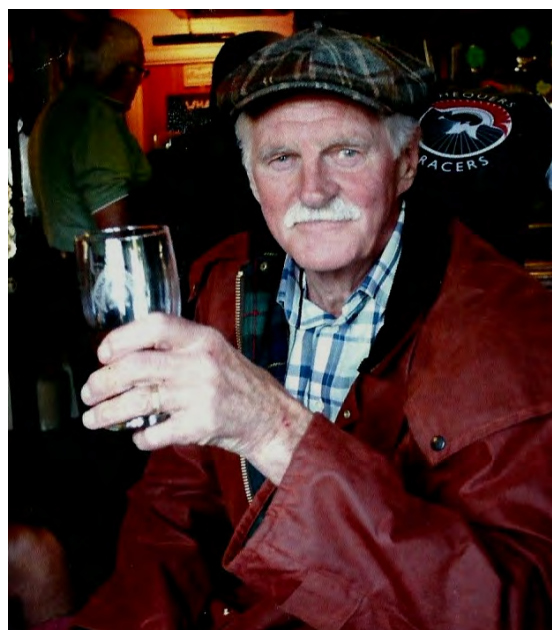




Farewell to Les

When three hundred mourners had passed through the door of St. Mary's, the PCC helpers stopped counting, as more and more arrived for the funeral of Les Leonard on 14th January. People were standing several rows deep at the back of the church, in the vestry and choir pews. The eulogy given by Bob Ogley, a friend and colleague of Les for over 50 years, received warm applause as he recounted all Les' activities and achievements with a theme that Les was universally loved, had thousands of friends, knew intimately most of the restaurants, pubs and breweries in England; had a passion for sport; rugby, skiing and cricket being among them; but above all that he loved his family – Marion, his wife, son Marcus and daughter Catherine, who sadly had passed away so recently. The service was conducted by Rev David Jones and members of the family and friends contributed with readings and a poem chosen by Marion and Marcus. It was a truly memorable occasion and will remain in the hearts of so many people for a very long time. A collection for Macmillan Cancer Support on the day raised over £1,000 and at the time of going to print more contributions are arriving.



The service was followed by a gathering in the village hall, where the numerous stories of Les and his busy, fun-packed life continued into the early evening, supported by a generous supply of one of Les' favourite beers, Larkins, and a wonderful spread of other food and beverages.

There will not be the like of Les Leonard again for a very long time.

A final message from Marion and Marcus who would like to send a big thank you to the 'Hunton hug', a phrase given by the Leonards to the kind messages, endless cards of condolence, and amazing support over the last few months.

Church Vacuum

St Mary's church needs a replacement vacuum; our old Henry is now not fit for purpose. Does anyone have a nearly new vacuum that they no longer require and are happy to donate to the wonderful cleaning volunteers of the church? Also if anyone has a penchant for cleaning brass, or polishing wood we would love to hear from you. Cleaning of the church is done on an "as and when" basis, so there is not weekly or monthly commitment. If you are able to help please contact Louise Ferns on 01622 820225. Many thanks.

Your Local Contacts:

Parish Council Chairman: Roger Sawtell	820731	Clerk to Parish Council: Sharon Goodwin	681238
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Village Hall Booking: Kathy Reid	820092
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Maidstone Police	690690 or 101
Pre-School Supervisor:	07972067110	Neighbourhood Watch: huntonwatch@gmail.com	820403, 820429, 820731
Pond and Tree Warden: Mike Summersgill	820429	'Potholes' Hotline (KCC)	03000 418181
Rector: Peter Callway	747570**	Churchwarden: Alison Ellman-Brown	820288
Non-Stipendiary Minister Revd David Jones	741474*	PCSO - Matthew Judges	101 (or via Huntonwatch)
Village Club: Philip Nichols	820804	Helen Grant MP helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk	0207 219 7107
		Hunton Bell Ringers, Michael Webb	745716

*not available on Fridays; **not available on Mondays

Diary Dates

Sunday 1 st Feb	East Farleigh Farmers' Market 10am-1pm
Tuesday 3 rd Feb	Hunton WI Village Club 7.30pm
Thursday 5 th Feb	Lunches Village Club 12.30-2pm
Sunday 8 th Feb	Snowdrop Spectacular St Mary's Church 12.30-2pm
Thursday 12 th Feb	Lunches Village Club 12.30-2pm
Thursday 19 th Feb	Lunches Village Club 12.30-2pm
Saturday 21 st Feb	Jo Harman Village Hall 7.30 for 8pm
Thursday 26 th Feb	Lunches Village Club 12.30-2pm

Contact details for other village clubs and organisations are available on the website

Parish Councillors Contact Details

Parish Council Chairman – Roger Sawtell 820731
Clerk to the Parish Council – Sharon Goodwin 681238
 Cllr Ron Porter 820220; Cllr David Heaton 820678;
 Cllr Tony Stanbridge 820761; Cllr Gary Thomas 820691;
 Cllr Steve Wyles 820403; Cllr Annette Trought 820448.

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. New events are being added all the time.

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

Dear Friends

As I write this, the news is full of the atrocities in France, the subsequent march of over a million people joined by many world leaders and the consequent government meetings about security. "Je Suis Charlie" has been the rallying slogan of the past week or two as the French (and others) seek to identify with the murdered journalists from the radical satirical magazine. There can be no other response than to condemn the murderous and terrorist actions of a few who seek to bring fear to others in the name of their cause. The whole situation must, however, cause us to pause and ponder upon a few important questions. When does free speech become, in itself, simply an agent to provoke, to belittle, to incite anger? Is it possible to draw a line that should not be crossed, or are we to tolerate anything that is said or written? What should our response be to the practically blasphemous words and images that such magazines as Charlie Hebdo publish? How influenced are we by the major media outlets? What should a Christian response be to such events? Can we make any difference?

I struggle with such questions as these myself and do not believe that there are any simple answers, nor do I believe I can tell you what your response should be; I do encourage you to think on them, however. I know, for myself, that I am drawn in by the big news stories that make the headlines and am easily distracted, for example, from the fact that the killings by Boko Haram in Nigeria have run into hundreds, maybe thousands, over the same few days. The latest edition of Charlie Hebdo following the killings has a drawing of the prophet Mohammed on its front page and will undoubtedly provoke more anger and grief amongst the Muslim population and others. I tolerate all kinds of things I disagree with for the sake of a peaceful life – although I do challenge individuals when I hear blasphemy and I hope that we are able to correct and be corrected amongst our own communities.

The issues and questions are big ones and we might be tempted just to give up in despair. The message of the gospel, however, is not one of despair or defeat but of hope and endurance. You may have heard the story of a man who was walking along a beach. The sun was shining and it was a beautiful day. Off in the distance he could see a young person going back and forth between the surf's edge and the beach. Back and forth they went. As the man approached, he could see that there were hundreds of starfish stranded on the sand as the result of the natural action of the tide. The man was struck by the apparent futility of the task; there were far too many starfish; many of them were sure to perish. As he approached, the young person continued the task of picking up starfish one by one and throwing them into the surf. As he came up to them, he said, "You must be crazy. There are miles of beach covered with starfish. You can't possibly make a difference." The person looked at the man, then stooped down and picked up one more starfish and threw it back into the ocean. He turned back to the man and said, "It made a difference to that one!" Maybe our response to issues where we feel powerless or helpless is to find our own "starfish". I'm sure we all know somebody who is grieving, or sad, or stressed, or lonely, or unwell at the moment. We should, of course, pray for them. Perhaps you might also visit, or send flowers, or buy a box of chocolates, or lay a gentle hand on a shoulder, or offer a hug. Maybe small acts of love, mercy and kindness will make a difference that will build God's kingdom, share his peace and show some love to those around us.

With many blessings, Peter Callway

Jo Harman – A Gig for Alan

Village Hall, Saturday 21st February – Doors 7.30pm

We start our packed spring season with a special 'remembrance' gig for Alan Bishop. Back in the Autumn of 2013, he'd booked Jo Harman & Friends to play a one-off Applause concert just before Jo moved on up and played the Royal Albert Hall (which was recorded by the BBC, and released to much critical acclaim); it was the last concert Alan attended, and a recording was with him in the hospice the next month. Now an international soul/blues/rock singer of note, and yet still true to her roots, Jo is bringing two of her band members to the hall for an intimate gig during her current UK tour (Christine & I will have seen her at Jazz Café Camden, by the time you read this); expect a really lovely atmosphere and some reflective songs of Jo's own and others' older soul hits.

Tickets are £12.50 per person, £7.50 for U-18s; £2.50 of each ticket price will be donated between the Heart of Kent Hospice & Cancer Research UK. As well as the usual half-time ploughman's, there will be some other snacks provided (and Goachers Ale etc. at the Bar) for the break, when there will also be a raffle to raise further funds for the cancer charities, with prizes donated by local businesses and by Jo's management. Although pay-on-the-door, we strongly recommend pre-booking with Mike (820429) or Steve (820403), because we cannot guarantee there will be space on the night; more than a month before the gig, 30 tickets have already gone on just 'local' advertising (well done, Hunton Facebook) and it has yet to be announced on Jo's Facebook page or website.

If Trad Jazz is your preference, then look out for our next concert with 6-piece Dr Jazz on 21st March.

New PCSO

PCSO Matthew Judges has taken over responsibility for the village from Alan Hunter. PCSO Judges can be contacted via the police non-emergency number 101 or via the neighbourhood watch coordinators on 01622 820403, huntonwatch@gmail.com.

Important date for your diaries:

The 2015 Hunton Village Fete will be held on Saturday 20th June 2-5pm

Parish Council Report

Having interviewed four people for the vacant parish council position, resulting from the sad and untimely passing of Les Leonard, Annette Trought was co-opted onto the council. On announcing the decision, Chairman Roger Sawtell thanked all four applicants for showing an interest and said that it had been a very difficult task to select just one person to join the council.

New PCSO, Matthew Judges, was unable to attend the January meeting but reported that there had been a non-dwelling burglary in Shinglebarn Lane, cable stolen from a telegraph pole in Water Lane and a number of muggings on the Medway towpath between East Farleigh and Yalding. Parishioners reported two recent break-ins to outbuildings where bolt cutters had been used to remove padlocks. Huntonwatch will be seeking a new coordinator for the Grove Lane area.

Work is underway in an attempt to resolve the ongoing issue of flooding outside Gudgeons in West Street. Cllr Sawtell has managed to coordinate the clearing of the ditches by Maidstone Borough Council and the cleaning of the drains by KCC and has discussed the problem with the landowner of the field opposite, who is willing to move the gate to try to prevent mud from clogging up the drainage system.

KCC has provided an estimate of £25,000 for the installation of kerbing alongside the playing fields, necessary to prevent erosion of the road surface and damage to the hedge. Cllr Ron Porter has been negotiating with KCC a reduction in the proportion of the cost that the parish council would be required to pay.

Work is progressing well on the new cricket pavilion. Building regulations approval and the foundations are expected to be in place by the end of January, with the building erected by the beginning of March.

Councillors are considering whether it would be beneficial to apply for conservation area status for either the George Street / East Street area or for the village as a whole, and whether this would help in preventing inappropriate development. They are to seek an opinion from MBC.

Councillors Allocated Roles

At the parish council meeting on 12th January it was agreed that individual councillors would take the lead and be the main contact point for any questions on topics of key interest to Hunton. The allocation of responsibilities is as follows:

- Roads and Pavements - Ron Porter (backup David Heaton)
- Ditches and Footpaths - David Heaton (backup Ron Porter)
- School, Police liaison, Speedwatch - Steve Wyles (backup Annette Trought)
- Communications, Village events - Annette Trought (backup Steve Wyles)
- Utilities (Broadband, Water, Electricity) - Tony Stanbridge
- Planning and environmental - Gary Thomas (backup Roger Sawtell)
- KCC, MBC, KALC liaison - Roger Sawtell (backup Gary Thomas)

If you wish to raise matters on any of the above you are asked to contact the relevant councillor directly. For matters not listed above please feel free to contact any councillor and the matter will then be passed to one person who will be your main point of contact.

In making this change to the way we operate it is our hope and expectation that we will be able to provide a better and more comprehensive service to the parish.

Hunton Parish Council

Village Club

It is that time of year again when the Club's annual subscription is due. There was a small increase of £2 agreed at the AGM, which is the first increase for many years. The subscription income is extremely important to the Club's finances and the committee is hopeful that members will rejoin before the end of February and take advantage of the prompt payment system. Payment by the end of February reduces the subscription from £17 to £12 and from £12 to £6 for senior citizens (65+). Membership cards are now available at the Club for collection.

Mondays are Bingo night in the Club. From 8pm you can play to win cash prizes, the more players there are, the bigger the prizes. There is no need to book, just turn up to play.

The Entertainments Committee is busy putting together a plan of entertainment at the Club for 2015. Please check the website www.huntonvillageclub.co.uk, the Hunton Herald or the Hunton Facebook page for updates. If you have any suggestions of what you would like to see in the Club, please let us know: info@huntonvillageclub.co.uk

Handyman or Woman Wanted

Is there anyone who would like to act as a handyman or woman at Peace Cottages almshouses in West Street? Someone is needed to help on an irregular basis with jobs such as clearing gutters, fixing light bulbs etc. An hourly rate would be negotiated. Anyone interested should contact Ruth Porter on 01622 820220 or Liz Oliver on 01622 820200.

Anyone for Bridge?

Do we have any bridge players or 'want-to-be' players in the Village?

Celia Kennedy-Sloane would like to start a bridge group. Please email her if you are interested: celiavks@gmail.com.

At St Mary's Church in February

Flowers		Services	
1st	Di Martin	1st February –	The Presentation of Christ 11.00am Family Service – Miss Chris Bostock
15th	TBA	8th February –	2 Before Lent 9.30am Holy Communion 1662 – Rev. David Jones
18th	Ash Wednesday – Clear Flowers No flowers in Lent	15th February –	Sunday Before Lent 11.00am Morning Prayer – Rev. Peter Callway
Snowdrop Sunday		22nd February –	Lent 1 11.00am Holy Communion – Rev. Peter Callway
St Mary's Church 8 th February 12-4pm Refreshments Available Fun Competition Free Entry			

Relative Minors Orchestra

Are you learning or already playing an instrument? Would you like the pleasure and fun of joining with others? Relative Minors is a Yalding based orchestra, established for over 20 years, for players of any age who are grade 2 standard and above. Its foundation...and name, came from families...adults and youngsters...joining together to learn and enjoy small orchestra arrangements. The orchestra has always been unique in its make up because anyone who wishes to join may do so, whatever their instrument (except more than one piano!) Over the years we have heard in our ranks trombone, tuba, acoustic and electric guitar, oboe and saxophone! We enjoy a very wide range of music, from Ravel's Pavanne and Elgar's Nimrod to Bohemian Rhapsody (Queen) and West Side Story (Bernstein). As we learn and polish orchestral pieces we do aspire to performing concerts for community events.

Our main focus is to have fun making music and we meet fortnightly during term time at St Mary's Church in Laddingford (near Yalding) on Sundays 5-7pm. We are always on the lookout for more musicians so if you would like to come along and try us out please ring Andrew on 01622 814251 or email thurstonland@outlook.com. You are assured of a warm welcome!

WI Meeting

The speaker at the January meeting was Fred Lamont, who gave a very informative talk about "The Chocolate Quakers", Cadbury, Fry and Rowntree, including a brief history of the Quakers and their philosophy. The Quakers were very concerned for the welfare of their workers, building villages to house them and providing leisure and education facilities, something that the Rowntree Foundation continues today.

The next meeting is on Tuesday 3rd February at 7.30pm at the Village Club and will include a talk from Jennifer Stuart-Smith entitled "An Alternative Approach to Flower Growing and Floristry".

East Farleigh Farmers' Market

The market will return on Sunday 1st February at the new time of 10am-1pm, which will give both stallholders and customers an extra hour in bed!

Soup and Cakes Return

These popular lunches will be back at the Village Club each Thursday throughout February and on 5th March, (but not 12th March as previously advertised in the January Herald), from 12.30 – 2pm. Delicious homemade soup, bread, cheese and homemade cake, served with tea or coffee, all for a donation of only £5, with proceeds going to support Hunton Club and St Mary's Church. There will be at least one vegetarian soup and options for those avoiding gluten available each week. All welcome!



Sunday Songs with Teatime Treats

Sunday 1st March 3pm

SS Peter & Paul Church, Yalding

An afternoon of songs from around the world performed by local choirs:

Village Voices, Energize,

Yalding School Choir, Yalding Junior Church Choir

Delicious tea & cakes in the interval

FREE ENTRY – Donations to GamBLE

February	1 st	8 th	15 th	22 nd
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	09.30 FS	08.00 HC	09.30 HC
W. Farleigh	11.00 Special	11.00 MP Mod	09.30 MP Trad	09.30 HC Mod
HC Holy Communion, MP Morning Prayer, FS Family Service				