

Cuckfield Life

Inc. Brook St, Ansty & Staplefield

Local village talk,
by the village

Issue #18 : Apr/May '14

Free



'Nick the Vic' prepares goodbyes

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EDITORIAL

By David Tingley, Editor

Hello Cuckfield! I'm pleased to say we have a mixed bag of original content that's all relevant to the village this month.

Later this month Cuckfield says goodbye to the vicar of Holy Trinity Church for the last 22 years. Many residents will know **Rev Nick Wetherall**, regardless of their churchmanship or beliefs, as he has been so involved in village life for such a long time. Claire Cooper spent time with him before he leaves and we are delighted to share this with you on **page 14**.

On the subject of churches; it's Easter later this month and, on **page 19**, check out the colourful centre spread put together by **Cuckfield Baptist Church**.

We are pleased to celebrate art in whatever form and, on **page 32**, we show off the work of the **Adventurers Art Club** which meets regularly in the Old School. Elsewhere it's a pleasure to hero three local teenagers who wrote a brand new musical – **The Shot Heard 'Round the World** – which played to audiences last month. Read about their experiences on **page 24**.

In the business world we are very happy to welcome into the village **Gardenia Tea House (page 6)**, who take on the premises formerly The Cuckoo restaurant on Broad Street. Plus a local beauty clinic – **Beauty Within** – is expanding as it moves just one door down the road on the High Street. Read the full story by Kate Fleming on **page 13**.

And I can't go without mentioning the forthcoming **Cuckoo Fair (page 8)** – Cuckfield's annual fair which descends on the recreational ground behind Queen's Hall. Last year was glorious weather and an amazing day. We can only hope that this year's retains this trend! Good luck to all those involved in making it happen.

See you there!

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Our pianist goes West!

By Lindy Elphick

Not only is the village of Cuckfield losing a much loved vicar this spring (see page 14) but we are also losing his very talented wife, Ruth Wetherall. One of the local groups that will miss Ruth the most is The Singing Allsorts, a Ladies' community choir based in Cuckfield. Ruth has played the piano for The Singing Allsorts for the past five years and has contributed significantly to its continued success.

Another local pianist has stepped in for the summer term but the Singing Allsorts are looking for a pianist to take on the role full-time, starting in September 2014. The Singing Allsorts rehearses in Cuckfield every Monday evening during term time. We start our rehearsals at 8pm, however the pianist's commitment would be from 8.30pm-9.30pm. If anyone would be interested in joining our group to fulfil this role, please would they contact Jane Haughton, Musical Director, on 07799 032590 or via email: jane_haughton@o2.co.uk

Free golf sessions

Have you ever thought about trying golf? Well now's your chance. Cuckfield Golf Centre is offering free golf lessons to beginners and returners to the game in its 'Learn to Play In May' project this Spring. During May the centre will be offering FREE lessons to include coffee, loan of equipment & range balls. The 15 sessions at different times during the month are designed to offer beginners an exciting introduction to the game through a fun informal approach, learning basic technique. There will also be plenty of chances to continue to learn and participants will have the opportunity to put their new found skills into practice with a 'Learn to Play in May on course group experience' at the beginning of June.

All Sessions will be delivered by fully qualified PGA Professionals Robert, Nevil & David and players may book individually or in small groups.

Please see advert on page 16 for details of times and dates.

Ready, set, walk...

The Easter Monday Walking Race takes place on Monday 21st April starting and finishing at Cuckfield Rec. Walkers will take in Ansty, Deaks Lane and Whitemans Green in the annual five mile walk organised by the Independent State of Cuckfield.

While the walkers are on their way, children are invited to search for the hidden foil-covered tickets which will win them an Easter egg.

The event starts at 10am and is open to all aged over 16 years but only Cuckfield Residents can win any of the individual cups. Teams can be entered by any Cuckfield club, society or institution, with the total of the fastest 3 times counting. Entry costs £2 and registration starts at 9.15am.



Charity Welly Walk



Fancy walking through ancient woodland, following gill streams and discovering historic Cuckfield whilst raising money for charity? On Saturday 26th May Holy Trinity C.E (A) Primary school will be hosting a sponsored welly walk in aid of St Peter and St James Hospice and the National Autistic Society. The walk has been mapped out by the High Weald and pupils to show off historic Cuckfield and the surrounding landscape – it covers 2.7miles or 4.4km and should take around 1 ½ hours.

Sponsor forms are available from Wealden Stores, Sussex Crafts, Holy Trinity School office or e-mail htgrounds@hotmail.co.uk - collect sponsors beforehand or donate when you sign in and pick up your map; adults £2, children £1. The walk starts and finishes at school and you can register anytime between 9am-2.30pm. Refreshments available all day.

Look out next month for details of the Cuckfield Scarecrow festival on 7th and 8th June.

A selection of properties for sale and recently sold within the village.

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Old times tea treats

Inspired by old fashioned values, a time of simplicity, community spirit and a slower pace of life, Gardenia Tea House will open its doors this month. Jan Evans and her fiancé Martin Marsh will be opening the beautiful character building in Broad Street, opposite the car park, as a vintage tea house with a lot of charm from yesteryear. Ambient music from a bygone era sets the scene to step back in time whilst enjoying afternoon tea served on tiered cake stands and sipping loose leaf tea from china crockery.

Open all day, cream teas and afternoon teas can be enjoyed in a relaxing nostalgic atmosphere, as well as light lunches from an exclusive vegetarian and pescetarian English tea room menu.

Having spent four years collecting vintage crockery to host special events for family and friends, Jan and Martin wanted to share their passion with others.

Future plans at the tea room include workshops, games nights, friendship and supper clubs.



May Food Market

Sat 10th Talbot Courtyard

9:30am-12:30pm



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Remodelling old jewellery is an exciting and cost-effective way of treating yourself to the best in contemporary design, particularly in these times of recession.

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Looking forward to the Cuckoo Fair

Plans are well underway for this year's Cuckoo Fair. The annual event, organised by the Independent State of Cuckfield and opened by the Mayor Mike Schlup, will take place on Bank Holiday Monday – 5th May.

This year's highlights will include Punch and Judy, balloon sculpturing, magicians and the popular Village Band which will play throughout the afternoon. There will also be a performance from BPM Dance Academy and a Zumba dance demonstration in the main arena, weather permitting.

Representatives from organisations in the village will provide a range of stalls and sideshows, while barbeques and a beer tent will keep hungry visitors happy.

Once again, visitors are invited to bring along their four-legged friends and enter them in the dog show – Cuckfield's answer to Crufts! The show, which will run throughout the afternoon, will include all kind of categories for all kinds of dogs!

Entry to the fair opens at 12.30pm and is FREE.



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Ansty Village Centre

By Claire Cooper

Plans for Ansty Village Centre in Ansty have moved a further step forward.

Mid Sussex District Council has granted planning permission for a new community centre. With permission already in place for a single hall, this gives the village a choice of two replacements for the ageing and well-loved meeting place.

Ansty Village Hall was originally a First World War army hut, which was dismantled in Holland and sold to the village by the Canadians in 1921.

Although old, with no proper foundations and in desperate need of repair, the hall is still a hive of activity and is home to many village organisations, such as the Ansty Sports & Social Club (AS&SC) as well as a monthly Arts and Crafts Club, Friendship Group, Garden Club and Card and Games Group. There are also Zumba classes, ballet lessons and even a school for problematic pets!

Following a request from the Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council and Mid Sussex District Council, further plans were drawn up for a bigger community centre to incorporate the village hall and social club, and provide changing rooms for the cricket and football teams.

Now these plans have been passed, villagers are focusing their efforts on raising the £1m needed to fund the centre.

Members of the Ansty Village Hall Trust, Ansty Sports and Social Club and Ansty Cricket Club have been raising funds and are currently applying for charitable status for the Ansty Village Centre Trust (AVC).

An application submitted by the AVC for funding from Mid Sussex District Council was successful, resulting in a grant of £127k. A public works loan of £100k is to be taken out by Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council.

The AVC have until 2015 to raise enough money to fund the new Community Building. "We are desperate to raise the rest of the funds needed in order that we can build a modern energy saving, environmentally friendly community centre – especially as we have lost our Public House, Church, Village Shop and Post Office. The hall is the only place where the residents can gather."

Members of the Ansty Village Hall Trust and the AS&SC have been raising funds for several years with events including race nights, auctions and pudding evenings, coffee mornings, cream teas and barbecues. In Cuckfield, members take part in the Mayor's procession,

the Cuckoo Fair and the Christmas Tree Festival in Holy Trinity Church. The next event will be the Ansty Village Multi Garage Sale, from 10am to 2pm on 26th April, when home owners in the village will be selling a selection of goods from the driveways of their homes. There will also be a sale in the village hall, plus coffee, teas and cakes!

Vice Chairman of the Village Hall Trust and event organiser, Marion Petitpierre explained: "We will produce a brochure with addresses and a map of everyone taking part, with a brief summary of items being sold. Brochures, which will also be entered into a lucky draw, can be bought for £1.50 at the village hall, where refreshments will also be on sale."

Marion is also organising a second '200 Club' lottery where, after 200 tickets are sold for £10, one lucky ticket holder will win £1,000.

Other events being planned will include a Summer Barbeque, Cream Tea, Bridge Drive, Village Fun Day on August Bank Holiday Monday and the annual sale of bacon butties to motorists and spectators from the Veteran Car Rally which passes through the village in November.

For more information, contact Maureen Gibson gibson50qqq@btinternet.com 01444 413061 or Marion Petitpierre marionpetitpierre@gmail.com 01444 453277. For the Village Fun Day contact Brian Fletcher brianfletcher@btinternet.com





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Beauty Within and Beauty Without

By Kate Fleming

On 31st January this year, The Times asked an important question. What makes a good village? It then proceeded to produce eleven ingredients which combine to achieve this. Cuckfield ticked all the boxes and then went into the realms of an excellent village by revealing the twelfth – a Beauty Clinic and Day Spa, namely Beauty Within. Positioned in the middle of the village, it has become a significant part of the High Street and made a valuable contribution to the life, economy and reputation of Cuckfield.

Earlier this month they moved premises, not to Brighton or the West End, but immediately next door, to provide us and all their clients from near and far with a spectacular brand new clinic which is spacious, luxurious, glamorous and able to cater for the demands of both Mrs and Mr 21st century. The growing male grooming culture has arrived in the High Street.

There are six treatment rooms, one of which is a double massage room, and a specialist medical room. Harley Street on your doorstep in a picturesque village setting surrounded by boutiques, restaurants and cafes, gift and flower shops. A shopper's paradise, without hassle, all in one place!

Michelle Abercrombie, the owner of Beauty Within,

has kept her specialist staff, each one highly trained and experienced in a range of treatments and procedures. The latest addition to the menu is Hot Bamboo Massage, ideal for anyone suffering from aches and pains after the Easter Monday Walking Race, or any excess of physical exercise, or just in need of the replenishment of energy.

Have you ever felt that you would like a makeover? Weary with how you look? Beauty Within has the solution in the form of Sarah Woodhouse, their new make-up artist. She comes with an awesome track record of society weddings and London Fashion Week, and, with the assistance of the new Make-up Beauty Bar, will give you the new Spring look that you have longed for all winter.

When you go into the beautiful cream reception area, for whatever reason, a warm welcome will be guaranteed, along with genuine knowledgeable advice, skilful treatment and even a cup of tea and a biscuit as you lounge on the luxury couches.

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So the High Street has been given a boost by this new venture, more trade for the businesses, more visitors to admire our stunning, historic and now state of the art village. Let's make sure we handle it with pride.

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Nick Wetherall

VILLAGE PEOPLE

In 1992 parishioners at Holy Trinity Church welcomed their new Vicar, Nick Wetherall, his wife Ruth and young son Tim. Now, after 22 memorable years including 338 weddings, 602 baptisms, a redevelopment of the old school, millennium celebrations and a spectacular reordering of the church, it's time to say goodbye as Nick retires to a new life in Cornwall. It's been an eventful two decades and Nick leaves behind a very different church to the one he joined. As he prepares for his last service Nick reflects on his time in the village.

by Claire Cooper

"I remember very well the first time I came to Cuckfield," Nick recalled. "I had been working as a Team Vicar in Leominster for five years and was ready to move and have a parish of my own.

"I contacted John Hind, who was the then Bishop of Horsham, who had taught me at theological college. He suggested I came to look at Cuckfield, saying it was my type of parish. He was right – I loved it at once!"

Nick moved to the village with wife Ruth and young son Tim in 1992 and it wasn't long before he was overseeing the first of several major changes for the parish.

"Three days before I arrived the parish had bought the Old School building, which had been standing empty for two years since the new school opened," said Nick.

Over the next few years it was transformed into a community hall and new offices for the church. "It has been wonderful to see the building restored and developed into the community building it is today," said Nick, who, at the time, was unaware that the development was just the start of bigger things to come.

In 2009, Holy Trinity embarked on one of the biggest developments in modern times – the restoration and reordering of the church.

"The parish had been talking about reordering for many years but the pieces were never in the right place for it to happen," Nick explained. "However, we had reached the stage where parts of the building were actually falling to pieces, so something big had to happen.

"Finally, after a lot of consultation, thoughts, ideas

and prayer we decided to go ahead and I'm delighted at what has been achieved." The £600,000 project included laying limestone flooring with under floor heating, new oak seating, installing an audio-visual system and the relocation of the Chancel screen to provide community space.

"There were times when I wondered if we were doing the right thing, and hoped and prayed that we'd got it right," he added. "We still need to raise substantial funds but the project has been hugely successful and the vast majority of people feel positive about what's been done.

"There's been a reordering around every 130 years – so it happened to come around on my watch!

"The reordering has definitely been a major highlight of my time here and I'm very proud that we have been able to set up the church for the next generation."

One of the most significant results of the reordering project is that it opened up the church as a venue for village events, including recitals and concerts, bringing many more people into the church.

"The church is now recognised as a lovely place to hold events and we have hosted some wonderful concerts," said Nick. "It's largely to do with the acoustics, which have changed quite substantially and resulted in a wonderful quality for listening to music." He added that members of the Sussex Symphony Orchestra were so impressed that they decided to make Holy Trinity their base during 2013.

Concerts have also included performances by Nick and Ruth, who are both talented musicians. Before being ordained, Nick was a professional singer working with

the D'Oyly Carte Company and Kent Opera. He also plays the oboe, while Ruth plays and teaches the piano.

Many parishioners will remember Ruth's 12 hour 'Pianothon', which raised thousands of pounds for the reordering project. "It was exhilarating, particularly as she didn't repeat anything in her repertoire," said Nick. Ruth also set up a year of lunchtime concerts, which were hugely popular.

"So many events have taken place that couldn't have happened here before and it's wonderful to see people are now using the church in many different ways," says Nick.

One of the most unusual ways the church is used is at Christmas, when the interior is transformed into a forest of festive trees. "I'm very proud of our Christmas Tree Festival, which was launched in 2003 and has grown to become one of the best loved events on the village calendar," said Nick. "At first there was great trepidation about filling the church with trees but it's been an enormous success and a great outreach project. Every year there's great excitement, as the festival raises substantial amounts of money for many charities. Thanks go particularly to Jean Sedgley, who at the time was Assistant Priest here at Cuckfield and whose inspiration resulted in the Christmas Tree Festival."

Equally memorable were the Millennium celebrations, when residents gathered at the Church to see in the New Year. "It was a foggy evening and we had enjoyed a dinner in the Old School before attending a gathering at the church at midnight," Nick recalled. "I will never forget seeing streams of people emerging out of the semi fog in the High Street. We formed a giant circle around the church, said prayers and launched fireworks which promptly disappeared into the fog!"

For the past few years Nick has been assisted by Sandra Hall, curate, who was ordained Priest at Holy Trinity in 2011. "It was a fabulous service – one I shall never forget," said Nick, who has also carried out 338 weddings, 50 services of blessing and 602 baptisms. "Every wedding here has been wonderful and it's always a privilege to be part of a couple's special day."

Outside the parish, Nick has always welcomed a challenge and has made the most of opportunities that have come his way. They included spending a year as Chaplain to the High Sheriff of West Sussex. "That was a great privilege, particularly as I had a ride in a police car and attended many very special events!" he says.

He has also been Rural Dean for five years, overseeing parishes in the area, as well as Diocesan Warden of Readers for another five years, with oversight for Readers in the Diocese. "I'm a great believer that clergy work should also take you outside the parish boundaries, otherwise it's easy to become very insular," he says.

Self-development has also been important to Nick, who gained a degree in theology while working in Cuckfield and also travelled to India during a two month sabbatical in 2002.

"At the time we were supporting three charities operating in India, so I had the ideal opportunity to go and visit them. Also, I was born in India and wanted to go to Calcutta to see the font where I was baptised," said Nick, whose visit included spending Holy Week with

Christians in Kerala.

During his time in the village Nick has seen many changes but is heartened by the community spirit that prevails. "The village has expanded enormously and many more houses have been built and yet Cuckfield has managed to maintain its sense of community," he says. "It's very remarkable and very commendable.

"I like the way the village has maintained its unique traditions, such as the Mayor's elections and Independent State which raises a huge amount of money and does much good in the village."

Nick's final service will be at 9.45am on Sunday 27th April. He officially retires on April 30th and is due to leave the village later that week. "We are moving 300 miles away and doing it all ourselves," he said. "We've hired a van which we have to fill, drive to Cornwall, unload, bring back, then clean the vicarage, all in one week! It's going to be challenging!"

Home will be a fisherman's cottage in a little village just outside Penzance. "We bought the cottage as a bolt hole in 1999 with the intention of eventually retiring there," said Nick. "Over the years we have got to know people, so it's not a completely strange area. So many clergy have the real challenge of moving away to an area they don't know."

The couple have always loved Cornwall. "We spent our honeymoon in Cornwall, fell in love with it and have spent many happy holidays there, so we are delighted to be retiring to a place that is so special."

Once settled, Nick intends to take at least six months before making any work-related decisions.

"Ruth and I went on a diocesan retirement course which recommended that for the first six months we take a complete break and don't do anything," said Nick. "Once retired, I lose my licence to conduct public worship, so working in another parish is not always straightforward."

Similarly, it's likely to be some months before Nick's replacement arrives in the village. "The diocese won't attempt to find a replacement until after I have gone," said Nick. "Then it's a case of finding the right person to come to Cuckfield, which will take time. I have no influence whatsoever in who might be my successor."

After Nick's departure, curate Sandra Hall will be stepping in to take services and run the church, assisted by the churchwardens. "I'm sure Sandra will continue to do a wonderful job," says Nick, who fully intends to return for visits.

"We have made some good friends here and we intend to keep in touch and visit as often as we are able. I will miss the people of Cuckfield and if, in some way, I have touched them with the love of Christ then that's wonderful," he said.

"I like to think that I have done my job here and that the parish is moving forward and will continue to play its part as a positive force for good.

"I am sure that my successor can take the parish forward but perhaps in a different direction from the past 22 years. I believe Cuckfield could be ready for its first woman vicar," he added. "The last thing it needs is a Nick Wetherall clone!"

New Cuckfield postcards on sale

Postcards of views of Cuckfield can be bought exclusively from Wealden Stores, Cuckfield Museum and in the High Street from Sussex Crafts and the Post Office.

In addition, and exclusive to Sussex Crafts, is a postcard featuring a heart of autumn conkers, photographed in Cuckfield's own nature reserve.



Scarecrow Festival

Watch out, Worzel Gummidge! Following the success of the first Cuckfield Scarecrow Festival in 2012, when over 80 scarecrows were on display in Holy Trinity C.E. (A) Primary School grounds, the event will be returning on 7th-8th June 2014.

The festival is open to the whole of Cuckfield; individuals, families, businesses, clubs and societies. To take part, just create a scarecrow in any shape, form or guise to go on display. It needs to be sturdy enough to survive outside, self-supporting and must arrive at school during the week of 2nd-5th June. For more info, pick up a leaflet at Wealden Stores, Sussex Crafts or e-mail htgrounds@hotmail.co.uk

The school grounds will be open Saturday and Sunday 10-4pm to view the scarecrows, admission £1.50 adults and 50p for children. Refreshments will be available all day, in aid of St Peter and St James Hospice and The National Autistic Society.

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Sat 17th @ 08.00

Sun 18th @ 12.00

Thu 22nd @ 19.00

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Sat 24th @ 13.00

Mon 26th @ 10.00

Sat 31st @ 16.00

Max group size 6 people. Why not book up as a group with some friends.

* Includes range balls and equipment.
Each player may sign up for 1 lesson only!



Bard in the Barn for local Hospice

An outdoor amateur theatre company is working on a fund-raising project for St Peter & St James Hospice with an eight night run of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*.

The husband and wife team behind the production, Cathryn & Geoff Parker, are working hard already to fine tune the performance by *Players in the Park*, which brings quality open air theatre to the people of Sussex.

The *Taming of the Shrew* is on 18th-21st June in a barn at Cockhaise Farm in Lindfield. All seating is reserved and indoors, with profits being donated to the Hospice. Tickets are already on sale and there are substantial earlybird savings if you buy before Easter.

See www.stpeter-stjames.org.uk



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Improving the Scout Hut

FROM THE MAYOR'S TABLE

By Mike Schlup

This month I'd like to tell you more about how the Independent State of Cuckfield has been able to help the Cuckfield Scout Group. Plus, I have exciting news of the first official candidate for this year's mayoral campaign, who also happens to be a past champion in the annual ISOC walking race.

But first of all the scouts. This is an organisation that is close to my heart as I was once a cub scout myself and then, more recently, I became involved again as a scout leader here in Cuckfield. A few years ago the previous leadership team undertook the mammoth task of raising funds to replace the dilapidated building that had served as the scout hut for so many years. They raised enough for a modern, albeit second hand, prefab building with plenty of space and facilities to accommodate the growing Scout Group. Guy Thornett, current chairman of the Group, explains more: "The hut was erected six years ago and still serves the Scouts, and other community groups, very well but, like any building, requires constant maintenance. As a Group we raise funds throughout the year but the more funds we spend on hut repairs the less there is available for scouting activities. In addition, the hut doesn't provide very good storage facilities for all the scouting and camping equipment that we have collected over the years. The generous donation from ISOC will allow us to bring the hut back up to scratch and put in the storage we desperately need. This means the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts can have the opportunity to take part in even more exciting and adventurous activities over the coming months and years. We are hugely grateful for all the support from ISOC." Guy continues: "What this money can't buy is volunteers. We have a long waiting list of children but we are always looking for adult volunteers to help support the group."

As I mentioned earlier, I am delighted to announce that Rob Helliwell, the landlord of the Wheatsheaf Inn, will be standing for Mayor this year and I wish him the very best of luck. I understand he is planning a fund-raising event with several jumpers, so knitting needles at the ready. We really need some more upstanding, or not so upstanding, residents of Cuckfield Parish to come forward as candidates this year. If you are interested, then email mikeschlup@gmail.com and I will send you more details, including tips on how to get your campaign started. Remember, it's not the winning that counts, it's the fun you'll have trying to win.

I am now looking forward to the Walking Race, which takes place on Easter Monday, especially as I will be presenting the trophies instead of walking this year. The race starts at 10am (registration from 9.15 at Cuckfield Rec). I managed just under 1 hour last year, so come along and see if you can beat the Mayor!



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*Now faith is being sure of
what we hope for and
certain of what we do not see.*

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and deserving of full
acceptance, that Christ
Jesus came into the world
to save sinners

**We have this hope as an anchor
for the soul, firm and secure...**

Christ in you, the hope of glory

the hope laid up for you in heaven

*Verses from the Bible: Hebrews 11:1, 1Timothy 1:15, Hebrews 6:19, Colossians 1:27b,
Colossians 1:5*



Hope

Rock Solid Hope

As a recently married 22 year old, I'm at a stage in life where lots of things claim to offer me hope.

I guess we place our hope in many things; education, a career, money, our spouse, children; and they're great things. They don't always deliver, or not in the way we'd hoped, but they are still a great blessing. We may even see our hopes and dreams come to fruition, with a great education that leads to a prosperous job, a loving marriage and healthy, well-adjusted children, but we know there is a deeper problem that none of those things address. There's still an element of hunger; something's missing. It's common to hear of successful people who remain lonely, or anxious, or feel they haven't achieved enough.

True hope can only come if it addresses the true problem. The things we like to hope in share the same flaw; they cannot help us when we die! We also tend to think of hope as wistful, maybe even wishful thinking. It's a dream of the best case scenario which our realistic self knows is unlikely to materialise.

But when God speaks of hope, he's talking of the expectant excitement of a future reality. The hope that can be had in Jesus is far from flimsy. He may bless us with many joys in this life, including relationships, family and money, but God's hope is not tied to these things; it comes from knowing him.

Hope for today is inextricably linked with hope for the future. Trusting in Jesus not only gives you the encouragement of his presence by the Holy Spirit now, but also the sure hope of eternity with him when we die; and that certainty holds incredible hope and peace for today. This is a certain promise that is yet to be fully experienced. God's Word never fails. His promises always deliver. That's why his hope is the best hope for today.

Luke Crowter



Monica's hope

Jesus forever!

What does a ninety-one year old still hope for in this life? I asked my dear friend Monica, of that age, to answer some questions on this topic. She inspires so many people. She loves gardening, daily walks and is enthusiastic about the kindness of people, the beauty of nature but most of all about her Lord Jesus.

Monica has had sadnesses and challenges in her life, as we all have, but she never feels 'hopeless' for long. When I asked her what encourages her at these times, she answered 'my church, my pastor, the Bible, my God, Jesus who shed his blood for me! It all intertwines!'. (She was thrilled at this new word to express how God uses so many ways to give us hope as Christians).

I asked her if she had a favourite Bible verse that gave her hope and she quoted Psalm 121, 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth'. Monica is constantly looking up, enjoying the changing cloud formations, colours and the birds in the trees that she can see from her window. However, this always makes her thankful to 'our great God' who gives us eyesight to enjoy what He has made.

Unsurprisingly, Monica's favourite hymn is 'How great thou art!' She says that it stays in her mind when she goes to bed thanking Jesus for dying for her, for taking and forgiving her sins. Her hope beyond this world is Heaven. I asked her whether she thought Heaven will be less or more beautiful than earth and she replied, 'I don't think there's any reason to worry about these things, we'll have Jesus, forever! We have him now! He took my sins!'

Sue Ebrahim with Monica Harvey

What are you hoping for?

I am hoping it will be a dry Spring and Summer so I can get out on my Suzuki Bandit for some exhilarating rides - yes I am a fair-weather biker I'm afraid.

I am hoping that England win the World Cup in Brazil - "some hope," I hear you cry!

Our hopes are desires; something we would like to happen but is uncertain or even unlikely. Hope in the Bible is radically different.

Hebrews 11: 1 reads "now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Perhaps that surprises you. Christian faith isn't about hoping for the best or leaping into the dark. It is all about certainty based on facts; definite reality.

I do not merely hope God is out there, I know he is. I do not merely guess there is a heaven and I think the odds are I will make it - I know there is a heaven and I know I am going there when I die.

Does that sound arrogant or presumptuous? Actually it isn't for this simple reason: my confidence is not a result of my cleverness or holiness (I am far from perfect and definitely no genius), my certainty rests entirely in Jesus. The fact is that Jesus really is the Son of God and that he really did die and was physically raised back to life. They are facts, they are the proof that there is a God - he came to earth and people met him, he rose from the dead and people saw him.

Our invitation to find solid hope in Jesus is not an invitation to suspend reason but to check out the evidence. Our testimony that you can have a heavenly hope is an invitation to get to know the most amazing, life-changing, wonderful person you could ever know - Jesus Christ. And your response to that invitation starts now...

David Sprouse

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Exciting new musical hits the stage

Former Holy Trinity School pupil Beth King has written a musical with two of her friends, Amy Scott and Lily Williams. The musical, 'The Shot Heard Round the World', premiered at Burgess Hill School for Girls on 13th March and was an overwhelming success. The girls, A Level students at the school, were responsible for the whole production from writing the script and songs to directing and producing it. Based on the life of Gavrilo Princip, the young assassin whose shooting of Archduke Franz Ferdinand triggered events that led to the outbreak of World War I, this thrilling and dynamic musical is highly topical and thought-provoking in this centenary year.

The girls chose the subject of the musical because, 'we were fascinated how one moment can change the course of history and we were intrigued by the appalling combination of implausible circumstance that resulted in assassination.' An extraordinary sequence of events found Princip on the pavement of a back street in Sarajevo at precisely the same time as the Archduke's car took a wrong turn and had to turn around. The shot that followed was truly heard around the world.

There were outstanding performances from all members of the cast, both from Burgess Hill School for Girls and from Central Sussex College. Playing a lead role as Franco, Princip's close friend, was Harry White, also a former pupil of Holy Trinity School: "The play is fantastically written by Lily, Beth and Amy and gives me, as an actor, a chance to explore the many emotions and complexities that make the character of Franco."

The girls are hoping that this is only the beginning for this musical. The powerful and moving songs make it worthy for many a stage!



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Think global, act local

VILLAGE GREEN

By Margaret Tyzack More, Cuckfield Local

When I was a child we sang a song about the cuckoo – 'In April I open my bill. In May I sing night and day. In June I change my tune. In July away I fly. In August away I must'. As cuckoos return from migration let's hope we hear their call loud and clear around the countryside telling us that all is well with Nature, the biodiversity that feeds all creatures. It would be a sad day, when our area is so surrounded with houses, if there were no habitats left for the insects to feed our cuckoos. This is a wake-up call for us to look at what we value and ensure that we do not lose this sound of spring and all that it represents.

Walking in the village and observing from our Cuckfield Local table at the monthly Market, it is a pleasure to see so many of our cotton bags and jute shoppers being used. In town they show up as a marker for people who care. Cuckfield is a caring community in so many ways. As we fly our lovely cuckoo along the high streets on our bags we are also saying 'Cuckfield Thinks Global, Acts Local'. Just think how our small actions of returning to the time before plastic bags is making a difference not only to the safety of local wildlife but of the rivers, seas and oceans. Talking of plastic, some of you bring your plastic lids and bottle tops to the Market, where they are collected and sent 'up country' to a recycling company to turn into pellets and extrusions for reuse by industry. A small act on our part which helps to reduce landfill. Win, win all round. Do have a think about this and join in the fun. Fun? You will be amazed at how many different kinds and colours of plastic tops and lids there are. Why not collect them in a container and bring them to the next Market at The Talbot on 10th May? We will be there from 9:30 to 12:30. You can buy your goodies for the weekend too.

CUCKOO CALLING

'If you build it, they will come' is the theme of our Nature Village event on Saturday, 26th April, when you can come and learn how to make homes in your own garden for butterflies, moths, ladybirds, other insects and hedgehogs. Ask your questions about building bird boxes and where to site them, and learn how to make small water features. These family demonstration workshops are running alongside the Grounds Day at Holy Trinity School, so you can have a good look round at all the wonderful work they are doing for nature there. Doors open at 10.30am with the workshops at 11am – 12noon, repeated at 1.30 – 2.30pm. And they're free!

To find out how to get involved in Cuckfield Local, email Margaret Tyzack More at makaet@yahoo.co.uk




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Ladies' Midnight Walk



You are invited to the 7th annual St Catherine's Hospice Midnight Walk, Horsham Park on Saturday 28th June sponsored by Welland Medical.

This year's ladies-only event is sure to turn heads. Everyone who signs up will receive a welcome pack including an eye-catching limited edition Midnight Walk T-shirt and access to training tips and ideas to help boost your fundraising and fitness. You'll also get a welcome back breakfast, hot drinks and a medal to thank you at the finish line.

This year you can choose from 7 miles or 13 miles, and the walk will start at 10.30pm.

Visit www.stch.org.uk/midnightwalk for details or call 01293 447364.



Penland Farm housing development refused

By Isobel Holloway

There were cheers of delight from a packed gallery when MSDC drew that essential 'Line in the Sand' on Thursday 3rd April. The Penland Farm housing application was unanimously refused by elected Members, despite the planning officer's recommendation for approval.

Cuckfield was not forgotten in this debate, as much of the discussion revolved around traffic and the 'strategic gap'.

Let's hope speculative developers get the message - Mid-Sussex is no longer an easy target for their inappropriate proposals.

The Penland Farm Action Group have shown what can be achieved with a vocal, well-supported campaign, and they will be 'ready and waiting' for the appeal.

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Swifts in Cuckfield

VILLAGE WILDLIFE

By Helen Crabtree

About swifts

Swifts spend the winter in Africa and are some of the last spring migrants to arrive in the UK to breed. Screaming parties of swifts are a familiar sight in Cuckfield from May to August. Swifts spend their lives almost entirely on the wing and even feed, sleep and mate in flight. They feed exclusively on insects and only come to land when nesting. Swifts nest in the eaves and under the roof tiles of our buildings, also using spaces behind holes in brickwork.

Why swifts need our help

New building techniques and materials are reducing the number of suitable nest sites available to swifts. As buildings are replaced, insulated or repaired, swift nest sites are destroyed or made inaccessible. It is thought that the destruction of nest sites has been a significant factor in the decline in swift numbers in the UK in recent years.

How many swifts are there in Cuckfield?

Although swifts can easily be seen on a summer evening, screaming to each other as they fly around the church and the buildings in the heart of Cuckfield, we do not know how many pairs nest in the village or which buildings are most important for them. More knowledge about their nest sites will help us to help them by protecting existing sites and providing new sites in nestboxes or by making simple modifications to buildings.

What can you do?

- If you think you have swifts nesting in the roof spaces of your house, please report this to village resident Helen Crabtree (01444 441687 or hcrabtree@gmail.com). Sharing your house with swifts is a great privilege!
- If you know other buildings in Cuckfield where swifts nest, or if you have seen very low-flying screaming parties of swifts close to where you live, please also report this.
- You might like to consider putting up specially-designed nestboxes on your house or making simple modifications to your house to provide more nesting sites for swifts. Please contact Helen Crabtree for advice about the possibilities.
- Please think twice before you begin any roof repairs or building work and consider whether in the process you could maintain existing nest sites or create new ones. Please ask for advice!



Academy continues to improve facilities

By Luke Mitchell, Head Boy

Warden Park Academy is planning many new exciting prospects in the upcoming year, a lot of which are focused on improvements to campus and premises. The ambitious developments currently in the pipeline will provide better facilities for students and the wider community in the years to come, should they receive the appropriate funding and grant applications that have been applied for.

One of these projects is the provision of a new suite of Geography classrooms, to take the place of the somewhat tired, prefabricated 'huts' that are currently in place opposite the main school building. This will create better facilities for the Geography Department and offer a learning environment that is more aesthetically sound. Running in conjunction with this will be the construction of a new Drama studio, which will be a shared space in partnership with the Mid Sussex Bridge Club, which has used existing Drama facilities at the academy for 25 years. Excitingly, planning permission for these projects has been granted and news on funding is being eagerly awaited, with decisions due in May.

Another ambitious plan for the near future is the building of a floodlit, third generation (3G) artificial turf sports pitch, for which the Academy is in the early stages of formulating a planning application. Funding

applications are currently being assessed for the project, with more news due in May. Due to the increasingly wet conditions that the long British winters (and sometimes summers!) offer us, sport sometimes has to be put on hold so as not to ruin the grass pitches. With a 3G pitch in place, no such problem will be presented and sports such as football and hockey can be year-round activities, as opposed to being limited by our unreliable weather. The new facility will also be capable of offering a wider range of sports and activities, in order to engage all students at Warden Park.

The Academy will also make this 3G pitch a resource for the local community too, and a number of local clubs have expressed interest in using the pitch once it is built. By enabling community use, the Academy will be offering great benefits not just to the students and staff of Warden Park but also to a wider group of people in the area. Cuckfield Cosmos Junior Football Club, which runs 28 teams for local children and have a long and successful association with the Academy, is set to be one of the main community users.

The Academy is keen to engage with residents and neighbours about the exciting new developments planned and an information evening is being hosted at Warden Park on Monday 12th May from 6.30–7.30pm.

Photo left to right: Colin Granlund, Business Manager; Luke Mitchell, Head Boy; Annabel Bridger, Head Girl; Howard Collins, Grants and Fundraising Manager.

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Spring lamb

ON YOUR TABLE

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Ingredients

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| 2 racks of lamb | 1 tablespoon fresh mint |
| handful of hay | 150ml olive oil |
| 1Kg Jersey royals | 4 tablespoons sherry vinegar |
| 1 heads spring greens | 1 lemon zest and juice |
| 2 tablespoons fresh basil | 4 anchovy fillets |
| 3 tablespoons fresh parsley | 330 ml cider |

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By Simon Dennis, head chef at The Rose & Crown

April brings beautiful fresh ingredients for spring including young lamb, flavoursome Jersey Royals, seasonal greens and a fresh herb dressing. This is the perfect time of year to eat this lovely food and I hope you enjoy my simple recipe made with great seasonal ingredients.



Method

1. Pre-heat oven to 190C or gas mark 5.
2. Start off by washing, then boiling the Jersey Royal potatoes with a sprig of mint and a pinch of salt. When cooked, drain the potatoes and lightly crush. Spoon into four ring moulds and place on a baking tray ready for the oven later.
3. To make the salsa verde, finely chop all your herbs and anchovies and mix them together with the olive oil and sherry vinegar.
4. Line a deep baking tray with hay and the cider. Seal the lamb racks and lay them on top. Bake for 8 minutes and rest for 5 minutes for perfect medium rare lamb.
5. While the lamb is resting, place the crushed Jersey royals into the oven and bake for 5 minutes.
6. Blanch the spring greens in boiling water, drain and serve with the crushed potatoes, salsa verde and three bone rack per person.

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Open gardens

The St Catherine's Hospice Open Gardens has raised over £70,000 for the hospice to continue to provide free care and support to patients and families throughout Mid Sussex and East Surrey. Why not visit a garden near you during Open Gardens 2014? Open Gardens 2014 is sponsored by Rogers Ceramics.

Friday 2nd May (9am-4pm), Burleigh Oaks House, East Street, Turner's Hill, Crawley, RH10 4PZ (John and Pam Mayne 01342 712852). Plant sale offering everything from bedding plants to vegetable plants for all types of gardens. Second-hand books and greetings cards for sale and a raffle are also available. Fee: free

Sunday 4th May (2-6pm), Birchanger, High Street, Balcombe, RH17 6JY (Marian Erritt 01444 413391). Birchanger is a beautiful seven acre garden with magnificent displays of rhododendrons, azaleas, camellias and magnolias. Explore the lily pond, fountains and arboretum. Fee: £4, children free

Sunday 18th May (2-5pm), Colwood House, Cuckfield Lane, Warninglid, RH17 5SP (Mrs Brenan 01444 461831). Twelve acres of garden to explore with mature and specimen trees from the late 1800s, formal parterre, rose and herb gardens, forsythia tunnel, water features and a lake. Fee: £5, children free

Cuckfield Golf Society

With spring and summer just around the corner it is time to get those golf clubs out. You can enjoy some of Sussex's lovely courses with Cuckfield Golf Society.

The Society was born in 1997 by a group of passionate golfers who live locally. This year's first golf day was held on 16th February at Mannings Heath Golf Club near Horsham and was sponsored by the Independent State of Cuckfield. Thirteen members enjoyed a full English breakfast before their round. Adam Cattel was the winner with a very good score of 38pts playing off a handicap of 19, Ken Gregory came second with 37pts and Mike Harkess 3rd with 33pts.

The Society also goes on a week's tour in September. New members are always welcome, contact Ken Gregory on 01444 457547 for more information.



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What's on this month

AT QUEEN'S HALL

April

19th **Cuckfield Vintage Emporium** 11am-4pm
A beautiful village hall full of vintage treasures, decorative homeware and rustic gardenalia. £1 entry (Darcy Shepherd 07773 360631)

25th **Craft Fair**

May

9th **Cuckfield Evening Flower Club** 7.30 for 7.45pm
Demonstrator: Margaret Williams, "Time after Time". New members and visitors always welcome

10th **Cuckfield Vintage Emporium** 11am-4pm

28th **Cuckfield Dramatic Society** 8pm

-31st 'Anyone For Breakfast' a comedy
by Derek Benfield
(www.cuckfielddramaticsociety.com)

Join in with Strictly Gardening event

Strictly Gardening, Haywards Heath's own community gardening Show, is certainly growing in reputation, with The Telegraph's Helen Yemm and our new High Sheriff of West Sussex, Jonathan Lucas, both taking part this year. The event, which takes place in The Orchard's Shopping Centre on Saturday 10th May 10am to 4pm, will provide the very best of advice, ideas and inspiration for gardeners – both green-fingered or just green – as well as lots of stalls and entertainment. The very popular celebrity panel will also be there to answer your questions, chaired by Jean Griffin of BBC Radio Sussex, and it's anything goes as far as the questions are concerned – the more intriguing the better!

Meanwhile, the whole community will be involved with the schools' painting competition, 'Over the Rainbow', a Scarecrow Procession and Award and a quite beautiful sculptured bird table prize for the best Mosaic from our Care and Nursing Homes. And, with the help of a WSCC grant, all these homes have been given the plants to create their own Sensory Garden.

Hosting the Show, Orchards Manager Nicola Bird, is very excited: "The best thing about Strictly is that it involves the whole of our community," she says. "Also, as I'm getting married this year, so it's pretty fantastic for me, as we move into our own home, that I'll be getting all the gardening help I'm going to need!"

AND ELSEWHERE

April

15th **Cuckfield Evening WI** – The Old School, Cuckfield 8pm – The Women's Land Army during the World War by Ian Everest

18th **Good Friday Family Service** – Holy Trinity Church 10am

18th **Good Friday Joint Service** at Christ Church Haywards Heath with Cuckfield Baptist Church 10.30am

20th **Easter Sunday** Cuckfield Baptist Church 10.30am

23rd **Royal British Legion Womens' Section** – The Old School 2.30pm – Blind Veterans UK

26th **Nature Village event** – Holy Trinity School, doors open 10.30am; 1 hour workshops 11am and 1.30pm. Free

26th **Ansty Village Multi-Garage Sale** – various locations 10am–2pm – a brochure with addresses, map and brief summary of items being sold can be purchased for £1.50 at the Village Hall (Maureen Gibson 01444 413061)

May

4th **St Catherine's Hospice Open Gardens 2014** – Birchanger, High Street, Balcombe RH17 6JY 2-6pm £4, children free (Marian Erritt, 01444 413391)

6th **NHS Retirement Fellowship**
Franklands Village Hall 10.15am
Annual General Meeting

10th **Cuckfield NSPCC Plant Sale** – Brinkley Lodge, London Road, Cuckfield – 10.15am-1.30pm
Coffee, cakes, plants and veg (01444 459579)

10th **Cuckfield Local Food Market** – Talbot Courtyard 9.30am–12.30pm

10th **Strictly Gardening** – see story (left)

11th **Slaugham Circular Ramble** (4.5 miles) starting from St Mary's Church Slaugham 12pm
Please bring picnic lunch (Jill: 07938 833868
www.midsussexramblers.co.uk)

11th **Wedding Fair & Fashion Show**
The Orchards Shopping Centre, HH

14th **The Mid-Sussex Franco-British Society** – Function Suite, Clair Hall, Haywards Heath 8-10pm. Film evening. Non-members: £4

18th **The Greater Haywards Heath Bike Ride** – 4 different bike routes around Mid Sussex (www.hhbikeride.co.uk)

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