

Cuckfield Life

Inc. Brook St, Ansty & Staplefield

Local village talk,
by the village

Issue #21 : Jul / Aug '14

Free



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EDITORIAL

By David Tingley, Editor

Hello Cuckfield. To start, it's a pleasure to hear more about the local a cappella group **No Strings Attached** who talk to Kate Fleming on **page 22**. This group has been singing together for a while now and many will have heard of them in Cuckfield, especially the regulars at The White Harte where they rehearse weekly. Thanks to Kate for putting this article together.

On **page 29** there's a chance to meet one of the stars of Cuckfield Dramatic Society's last production, **Kirsty Bishopp**, who kindly chatted to me a few weeks ago and shared her story of how she became involved in CDS and has never looked back!

Ron Knight, this month's Village People subject on **page 18**, also links us to the story about an up and coming pop band in the 60s, **The Deputies**, who started life in the Youth Club right here in Cuckfield. Read the full story of the band's history and the 50 year reunion on **page 21**.

Elsewhere in the magazine we have got plenty of coverage of the imminent **referendum** on the **Cuckfield Plan**; one of only a relatively small number of plans that have made it this far in the country. This is a really important issue for Cuckfield as, by having this document in place, it means the village has a say on where new developments are situated in the village boundaries. Nearly 50 local residents have worked on this plan and got it to this point. Read the articles on **pages 6 & 15** to find out why you should turn out on Thursday 24th July.

There is also a remarkable story of both courage and determination as two groups of residents work towards the same goal of getting an **automated defibrillator** installed in the centre of the village. The group of friends vow to still take on Europe's toughest one day cycling event and Claire got the reason why on **page 10**.

Do stay in touch, and keep the cover photos coming in please. Our next copy deadline is 28th July.

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We'd love to hear from groups, organisations and individuals about what's happening locally. Include a photo if you can. Email your stories to editor@cuckfieldlife.co.uk



Local beef on Ockenden menu

The team at Trenchmore Beef, who produce a new slow-grown beef in nearby Cowfold, celebrated recently as Stephen Crane, Head Chef at the Michelin Starred restaurant at Ockenden Manor, chose to put Trenchmore Sussex Beef on his menu.

Joanne Knowles commented: "We are really grateful to Stephen who generously supported us with his time whilst we were researching and setting up and, after sampling the beef, decided it was good enough to go on the fabulous menu at Ockenden."

If you want to cook Trenchmore beef yourself, it is available at the Union Jack Farm Shop in Cowfold.

Did you know Mollie?

Mary (Mollie) Elms: born in Sheffield, 1868, died in Cuckfield, 3rd January 1954. Now relatives are trying to find out more about her life here in Cuckfield.

Mollie served as a medical missionary for the Church Missionary Society from 1901 to 1926 in Nigeria. During this time, with meagre resources, she battled against enormous difficulties, bouts of serious illness, and local opposition and superstition. Eventually, a hospital was built and named in her memory. She was awarded the Cross of St. John of Jerusalem.

On returning to England, Mollie lived for a time in Sheffield, later settling in Cuckfield. She maintained a keen interest in the overseas work of the church, writing and travelling for as long as she was able.

The Cuckfield Parish Magazine reported her death in February 1954 and listed her burial as having taken place on 7th January. (We were unable to find any evidence of a grave during a brief visit to Cuckfield in 2013.) Mrs Dutton would be interested in any further information or to hear from anyone who has personal memories of Mollie.

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Poppy and Alice are a cut above the rest!

The pair have had their flowing locks chopped short to raise more than £1,400 for the Angus Rowland Forget-Me-Not Fund.

Angus, from Staplefield, died from acute myeloid leukaemia in 2011, aged just 14. Since then his family and friends have been raising money for research into the disease which is difficult to treat.

The idea for the charity haircut came from Poppy, a close friend of Angus after meeting at St Mark's School in Staplefield. "I'd been wanting to do something to raise money for the fund for quite some time but in the end the haircut was a spontaneous decision," she said. "My friend Alice thought it was a great cause, so we decided to do it together to celebrate the end of our exams!"

Watched by their parents and Poppy's sister, the girls underwent their dramatic transformation at Bellamie Hairdressers in Handcross, enlisting the help of stylists Rachel Fisk and Jenny Crowley from who agreed to carry out the haircuts for free.

"I hadn't had my hair short since I was a child and it was down to my elbows," said Poppy. "Alice's was even longer – waist length!" The hair has been saved and sent to the charity The Little Princess Trust, which makes wigs for children undergoing treatment for cancer.

The girls are delighted with their new looks and Poppy is in no hurry to let it grow. "I'm enjoying having short hair, so will keep it short for now," she said. "We are absolutely thrilled to have raised so much money and were completely blown away by the generosity of

everyone who has supported us."

Angus' mum Elizabeth added: "We were delighted to hear from the girls and very proud of them for doing this. They have raised money for Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research and have donated their hair to benefit others too. It is wonderful that so many young people want to get involved with our fundraising and to make a difference."

Later this year the girls will be joining Angus' family, friends and supporters of the charity in the 4th annual Angus Rowland ForgetMeNot run/walk.

The event, on Sunday 5th October, will start and finish at Staplefield Village Hall.

The walk is open to all and there will be choice of two local routes - a 6.5 mile trek on muddy rural footpaths or a 1 mile walk mainly on roads.

Registration will start at Staplefield village hall at 9am for walkers and 10am for runners. Participants can register on the day or online at <http://bit.ly/1jfuafH>

The organisers suggest a donation of £10 for adults and £5 for children under 14. This will include a T-shirt. (Those who have T-shirts from previous walks are asked to bring them along.)

Refreshments will be available throughout the morning in the village hall.

For further information contact angusfmn@brantridge.co.uk or visit the regularly updated facebook page www.facebook.com/AngusRowlandFMNFund

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Cuckfield Plan goes to the vote

On 24th July Mid Sussex District Council have called a public referendum on the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan (NP). Cuckfield is one of only 27 NPs in the country that has got this far. It's an amazing achievement and a credit to the 50 or so local residents who have helped form it.

All residents of the village should have received a polling card through their letterboxes. A simple majority of votes (over 50% of those voting) in favour of our Neighbourhood Plan is sufficient for it to succeed. Voting will take place between 7am-10pm in The Queen's Hall. Here's what some in the village are saying about the plan...

This is extremely important for all residents of Cuckfield to make sure that there is full agreement on issues like development of new housing but not at the expense of the rural nature of this beautiful village.

The plan potentially gives a great deal of power to local residents and therefore I urge all residents to get involved. The three key issues are:

1. How much additional housing do we need and where should this development be located?
2. What additional infrastructure do we need?
3. How do we make sure that the character and rural nature of our beautiful village is not destroyed?
Please do get involved.

Geoffrey Dennis, local resident

It is vitally important that the village turns out en masse to support the Neighbourhood Plan by voting 'YES' on 24th July.

The question you will be asked to support is:
Do you want Mid Sussex District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Cuckfield to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?

The Cuckfield Society committee would ask that you make every effort to vote for the Neighbourhood Plan on 24th July and so support the extraordinary hard work of the NP team; they have worked tirelessly to produce a professional plan, that the independent examiner praised highly and called an example to others.

The Cuckfield Society

It is vital that everyone who can, votes 'YES' at the referendum. The Neighbourhood Plan is the means we have to control the future of our village; to preserve and protect our community facilities, such as the Youth Club building where Playgroup is held, and to ensure development occurs at a pace that the parish can accommodate.

Sarah Raison, Chair of Cuckfield Pre-School Playgroup

I will be voting 'YES' in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan. We can't simply stop development in Cuckfield but we can try to manage it so that it helps the community to grow in a controlled and stable manner. Although these matters might not affect you directly now, they may do in the future and will certainly affect the next generation of Cuckfield residents. I encourage everyone in the parish to find out about the plan and to cast their vote.

Mike Schlup, Mayor of Cuckfield

The referendum is an opportunity to register your view on the future development of Cuckfield and to listen to and respect the views of others. Community is about people - so make sure you join the conversation!

David Sprouse, Baptist Church pastor

See letter from the Parish Council on p.15



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Win FREE tickets to outdoor cinema at Wakehurst

Movie-goers can once again get their fix of al fresco films at Wakehurst Place this year, as The Luna Cinema releases the dates of this year's shows and films.

What better way to end lazy hazy days of summer than settling down to enjoy a favourite film with friends and family over a picnic? There are two films to choose from. The 1987 classic hit *Dirty Dancing* (12) will be shown on Sunday 24th August on the lawns outside the mansion house, and on Monday 25th August the massively popular *Gravity* (12A) will be the feature.

Doors open at 6.30pm to enable guests to find the perfect spot to enjoy a picnic before the film starts at 8pm. No seating will be provided, so do bring your own picnic rugs or folding chairs. There will be a 'picnic blanket only' section in the front central area of the lawn.



Glamour and films have never been far apart and cosmetic firm Benefit will be on hand to provide complimentary makeovers, product giveaways and even the chance to walk the pink carpet.

Tickets for the event can be purchased from Wakehurst Place ticket office or from Luna Cinema by visiting <http://bit.ly/1qX1z0J>. Adults are priced at £14.50 and children £10.50.

However, there is one pair of tickets for the screening of their choice to be won by one lucky reader of Cuckfield Life. In order to take part in the giveaway, please email your name, email address and phone number to competition@cuckfieldlife.co.uk before 28th July and one will be selected at random to win the tickets. Mark your email with the subject: 'Cinema'.

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Team Hagon take on The Marmotte

By Claire Cooper

When five Cuckfield dads decided to tackle one of the toughest bike rides in the world, they assumed it would be the biggest challenge of their lives.

But a tragic twist has left one of the team with a far bigger challenge as he battles to recover from a series of heart attacks.

Dad of two Paul Hagon suffered a heart attack while training for Europe's toughest one day cycling event – 'The Marmotte Granfondo'. Paul was taken ill at the K2 gym in Crawley and his life was saved by a member of staff using the centre's portable defibrillator machine.

After debating whether to withdraw their entry in the event, his four friends decided to go ahead with the challenge and raise money to buy an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) machine, similar to the one that saved Paul's life.

"Paul's life was saved because K2 had a defibrillator machine and staff who were trained to use it," said his wife Kate. "It's not until a terrible thing like this happens that you realise that a simple machine can mean the difference between life and death.

"I'm delighted that the boys decided to carry on and raise money for this wonderful cause. When Paul regained consciousness after his heart attack the bike ride was all he wanted to talk about. He will be thrilled but slightly jealous too!"

Paul still has a long journey ahead as he battles to recover from a series of setbacks but has recently moved to a rehabilitation unit in Horsham to continue his progress.

Meanwhile, his cycling buddies have been focusing their efforts on training and getting sponsorship. They have joined forces with members of the Inspire Youth Group, from Holy Trinity Church, who, by coincidence,

were already raising funds for the Sussex Heart Charity which supplies and provides training for defibrillator machines.

Volunteer Nicky Lawrence, who is leading the fundraising project, has already secured a grant to buy a defibrillator machine, which will soon be fitted to the wall of Mansell McTaggart estate agents.

With help from the cyclists, Nicky and the youth club members are hoping to purchase another machine for the village. (There are currently two machines in the village – one at Queens Hall and the other at Warden Park School.)

"We were delighted when our application for a £1,000 grant was successful, as that meant we could buy our first machine and start raising funds towards a second," said Nicky. "Now, with the help of the cycle team, we hope to not only buy a second 24hr Public Access Defibrillator but also to give a good donation to the charity."

The cyclists, who have taken on the Marmotte challenge starting from at Bourg d'Oisans earlier this month, are Nick Fawcett, Paddy Westbury, Chris Renardson and Adrian Bennett – now known as Team Hagon.

Before leaving for France on 3rd July, Paddy explained how the friends came up with the idea of entering the Marmotte challenge. "Last year Chris and I completed the King of the Downs event – a mammoth 115 miles cycle challenge climbing 10,000 feet," he said.

"Off the back of that, during a beer fuelled night, bravado got the better of common sense and we decided to go for it! I guess we're all middle aged men in crisis who can't afford sports cars!"

Keen cyclist Chris rode the bike which belonged to his late father. "Dad and I completed many cycle rides

before he died from cancer," said Chris. "By riding his bike, he'll still be with me in spirit!"

The Marmotte attracts around 8,000 cyclists from all over the world. "It is considered as comparable to any of the most challenging high mountain stages of the Tour de France and involves the famous alpine mountains, including the Col du Glandon, Col du Telegraphe, Col du Galibier and the final ascent of the legendary Alpe d'Huez with its 21 hairpins!" said Paddy.

"The final climb is equivalent to riding up 10 Ditchling Beacons!"

The cyclists have all been training hard for the event and the recent spell of hot weather has helped them prepare for the extreme conditions. "It's going to be very hot, and we expected to be burning around 9,000 calories, so keeping hydrated is really important," said Paddy.

"Personally I'm more concerned about the descents than the climbs, as going too fast and braking too quickly can be really dangerous."

But the dads were determined to complete the ride together, knowing that Paul would have relished being alongside them.

"Paul's serious illness has resulted in him, Kate and children Tom and Ellie (pictured right with Paul) facing a mountain far greater than anything the Alps has to offer," said Paddy. "But we know that the family will rise to the challenge with the strength and positive determination that characterises the Hagans."



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Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan

REFERENDUM

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Cuckfield

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News from Cuckfield Parish Council

SPECIAL

Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan

A Twenty Year Plan for Cuckfield - 2011-2031

Vision: a Neighbourhood Plan that ensures Cuckfield will continue to thrive, meeting the changing needs of the community whilst preserving the distinctive character, landscape and setting of the village that has evolved over nine centuries of history.

Dear Cuckfield Resident,

Upcoming Referendum: Thursday 24th July 2014

My name is Nigel Page, Chairman of the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan team. I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some final thoughts ahead of the upcoming referendum on 24th July 2014. At time of writing there are still 4 weeks to go and I want to make sure everybody in the village is aware of the referendum and why it is important for them and the future of the village.

In the referendum you will be asked the following question with a Yes or No option:-

"Do you want Mid Sussex District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Cuckfield to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood plan area?"

If there are more than 50% of the votes cast in favour, it then becomes part of the Development Plan for the area and a statutory consideration in determining planning applications. Currently planning applications are determined against National and District policy, which are not specific to the Cuckfield area.



Community consultation at Holy Trinity School

The Neighbourhood Plan is specific to Cuckfield and contains policies and evidence which have been based on feedback from the public consultations. In particular:

- Identify sites which will bring forward new market housing and affordable homes
- Ensure Cuckfield retains its distinctive character and setting between the High Weald AONB, South Downs and neighbouring settlements
- Protect the village centres of Cuckfield and Whitemans Green
- Provide identified infrastructure and allow expansion for both schools, whilst taking into account the environment and ecology
- Ensure the health and well-being of residents and seek to allocate and protect open space, community buildings and essential services such as the Youth Club and playgroup in London Lane

The plan has been independently examined, with minor modifications, to ensure it meets the required legal obligations. You may have seen that the examiner called our plan exemplary and particularly liked the community consultation and had no hesitation recommending it proceed to referendum, making it the first in Mid Sussex to do so, only 26 Councils and Parishes in England have made it this far. I encourage you to take a look at all the material available online at www.cuckfieldplan.com or stop by the Parish Council office to review all the material, or talk to Nicky or Jane who will be pleased to answer any questions you have. You can also ask me a question directly at info@cuckfieldplan.com

I look forward to sharing the result of the referendum.
Yours Sincerely

Nigel Page
Chairman Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan



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A very special birthday

Popular Cuckfield girl Peg Swain celebrated her 90th birthday with a party held at The Old School Cuckfield, where she was a pupil from 1929 until 1938.

Years later, Peg's son Jim and daughter Jane also attended the Old School as pupils in the 1950s.

Peg's family organised the party knowing she would enjoy having her family together and sharing the occasion with friends from the many areas of her life spanning many decades.

Guests arrived from many local groups and organisations, including the British Legion, Cuckfield Museum, Sewing group, ISOC, Cricket and Football club, Cuckfield Hospital, Cuckfield Society and the Cuckoo Choir.

Peg's daughter and granddaughter prepared a photograph album, starting with black and white pictures of her as a babe in arms through to the present with a picture of her carrying a poppy wreath on Armistice Day.

Among the guests was Museum curator Phillippa Malins, who paid tribute to Peg's contribution as a museum steward.

"She has wonderful stories of growing up at the White Harte where her father, Ernest Stuchbury, was landlord and of all the characters who used to frequent the pub. She drives in from Handcross to do her duty each month, undaunted by most weathers," said Phillippa.



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Ron Knight

VILLAGE PEOPLE

Father and son Ron Knight senior and Ron Knight junior have led very different lives. One was a war hero, dismantling bombs both on the ground and under the sea – the other a member of Cuckfield's famous 60s rock and roll band who later emigrated to Canada. Yet the bond between father and son was incredibly strong and has led Ron junior to publish a book about the man he describes as 'the finest individual that walked the earth'. The book 'Do two Rons make a Knight?' tells the stories of both men and gives an insight into life in Cuckfield over the last 100 years. Claire Cooper caught up with Ron junior when he returned to the village last month.

by Claire Cooper

It was romance that first brought the Knight family to Cuckfield. Young William Knight, a carpenter from Reigate, fell in love with Rose Botting, a girl from a local Cuckfield family. The couple married and settled in Whitemans Green where they brought up seven children, including Ronald Pelham Knight, one of the youngest, born in 1916.

While some of the siblings grew up and left the village, Ron and a sister stayed on.

"Keen to serve his country and perhaps see a bit of the world, Dad tried to sign up for the army but was told he was too young," said Ron junior. "He had to settle for working for Green's fishmonger delivering fish around the village, first on a bicycle, then in a motorcycle and side car."

Finally, Ron got his wish and was accepted into the Royal Engineers and sent to Gibraltar. "Dad kept notes in a diary during the war and his notes form the basis of my book," said Ron.

Ron was serving in Gibraltar while the Spanish Civil War was in full swing and during this time he was called upon to chauffeur dignitaries around 'The Rock', including Sir Anthony Eden (later to become Prime Minister) and Lord Gort.

Ron looked forward to returning to Cuckfield on leave and during one visit met and fell in love with a beautiful Irish emigrant, Ellen (Nellie). "It was an odd romance, he being a full time soldier, with a war going on," said Ron.

On one occasion Ron had managed to get a passage home on the boat HMS London but during the journey the battleship Bismarck had been spotted heading out

into the North Atlantic. "The Bismarck was a terrible threat to the British convoys and one of the most powerful ships afloat," said Ron. "As a result, HMS London, and all its passengers, was immediately diverted as escort in the aircraft carrier Ark Royal battle group in pursuit of Bismarck."

It wasn't until several weeks later that Ron finally arrived on British soil – via West Africa!

On his return to England, Ron found himself facing one of the most dangerous jobs in the army. "He was part of a team dismantling unexploded bombs in and around London airfields and later volunteered to join a D-Day team bound for Normandy," said Ron. "Their job was to clear the beaches of landmines to bring in communication cables."

After landing on the beach at Normandy, Ron took part in many of the landmarked battles such as the battle for Caens, the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge and A Bridge Too Far).

It was incredibly dangerous work from which many did not survive. "I've been told that, at one time, life expectancy of the bomb dismantling team was just three or four weeks," said Ron. "Dad lost many comrades including his best friend Bonny, who was blown to pieces in front of him."

"In the end, he was alone – the only member of his group to survive."

Ron's experience in dismantling devices, combined with his athletic ability, made him a perfect candidate to train as an army diver. "Dad dismantled underwater bombs and other explosive devices, before having to retire after blowing both his eardrums in an emergency

surface," said Ron. "He also survived a sniper attack while riding a motorcycle in Holland."

During this time Ron's wife and children had been living in Ireland with family. "I entered the scene in 1944 while dad was immersed in the battle for Europe," said Ron.

But after the war the family returned to Cuckfield. "We couldn't believe our luck when we moved to Brainsmead," said Ron. "There was running water, electricity and a toilet!

"I'd been used to waiting my turn to bathe in a tub filled with tepid water and I had learnt to catch mice as soon as I could toddle!"

Reunited with his family, Ron felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude for having survived the war and an obligation to support those less fortunate.

"Dad always felt he owed a huge debt to his comrades who didn't come back from the war and it became his mission to pay them back in some form," said Ron. "He and Mum provided an unofficial meals on wheels service, cooking Sunday dinners and delivering them to those in need in the village.

"Dad also enjoyed hospital visiting, reading stories and playing crib with patients."

As the village window cleaner, who also delivered milk with local company Gubbins, Ron was known by everyone in the village.

"He was a terrible businessman," laughed Ron. "He never put up his prices and would regularly carry out extra jobs for his customers for free, like mending their sash windows and picking up their groceries."

Ron's ability to get on with everyone, including young people, made him an ideal candidate to run the local boys' club. "The church curate asked dad if he was interested in running the club," said Ron. "When he went along to visit, there was a group of boys outside who the curate described as local trouble makers."

Ron decided there and then that he would take on the job on three conditions - that the club was multi-denominational, that girls were accepted and that 'troublemakers' outside were let in.

The curate agreed and Cuckfield Youth Club was born!

Before long, Ron enlisted the help of friend Jack Swain and the pair of them began running local football teams. "They won a lot of local championships with teams of boys from the village, many of them brothers," said Ron.

After negotiating with a local farmer, Ron secured a cow field for training. "Before matches Dad had to go and chase the cows off the fields," Ron added. "They then hand painted the lines with a paint brush and bag of lime."

"The pitch had a slope on one side that was so steep the left wingers were known to disappear from view! There were no changing rooms - we all dressed and undressed under a tree!"

Despite the lack of facilities, the football team had many successes, as did the swimming, billiards, table tennis, darts and track & field teams.

Himself a member of the Youth Club but never a great sportsman, young Ron Knight's passion was for music and with like-minded youth club members, formed The Deputies, who enjoyed a 50 year reunion during Ron's visit to Cuckfield last month. (See story on page 21.)

In 1966 Ron junior made the life changing decision to



emigrate and left for Canada. "I went with dad's blessing but mum wasn't too happy," he recalled.

However, it wasn't long before he returned to British soil and to his family. "I came from a close knit community and large family, where I was constantly surrounded by people I knew," said Ron. "The loneliness I experienced in Canada surprised me." Ron found a job working for the Mid Sussex Times in Haywards Heath and remained in Cuckfield until the urge to return to Canada became too strong.

"Canada still called, so I decided to give it another go."

This time Ron surrounded himself with great people and found work, first as a logger and then as guide leading horse rides all over cowboy country. "I was working on the British Columbia plateaus, leading up to 60 guests on full day rides. It was a fantastic time for me."

Ron finally made a career in the advertising business as one of the MadMen team. "We worked hard and we played hard - it was wild and wacky," he recalled.

He met his wife Lynda and they went on to have three children Martin, Christopher and Susanne.

Ron later became a partner in a national advertising agency and a prestigious graphic design studio, and after retiring took up acting, writing and doing gigs as part of a guitar/vocal duo.

He returned to Cuckfield as often as possible over the years and was delighted to welcome his parents to his home in Canada on many occasions.

"Mum and dad loved to come and visit," said Ron. "As telephone calls were very expensive in the early days, we had kept in regular touch by recording on cassette tapes and sending them back and forth across the Atlantic."

Ron senior died after a long battle with cancer in 2000 aged 84 and is buried in the Holy Trinity churchyard, soon to be joined by his beloved Nellie. "The streets and the church were packed with people for his funeral," said Ron.

"Dad's story is one of stubborn survival in a tough working class environment, loyalty and dedication to his country and comrades, and the payback that he felt he owed to the fallen. He dedicated his life to unpaid public service and really made a difference.

"I idolised him - to me, he was the finest individual that walked the earth."

A copy of Ron's book is available at Cuckfield Museum.



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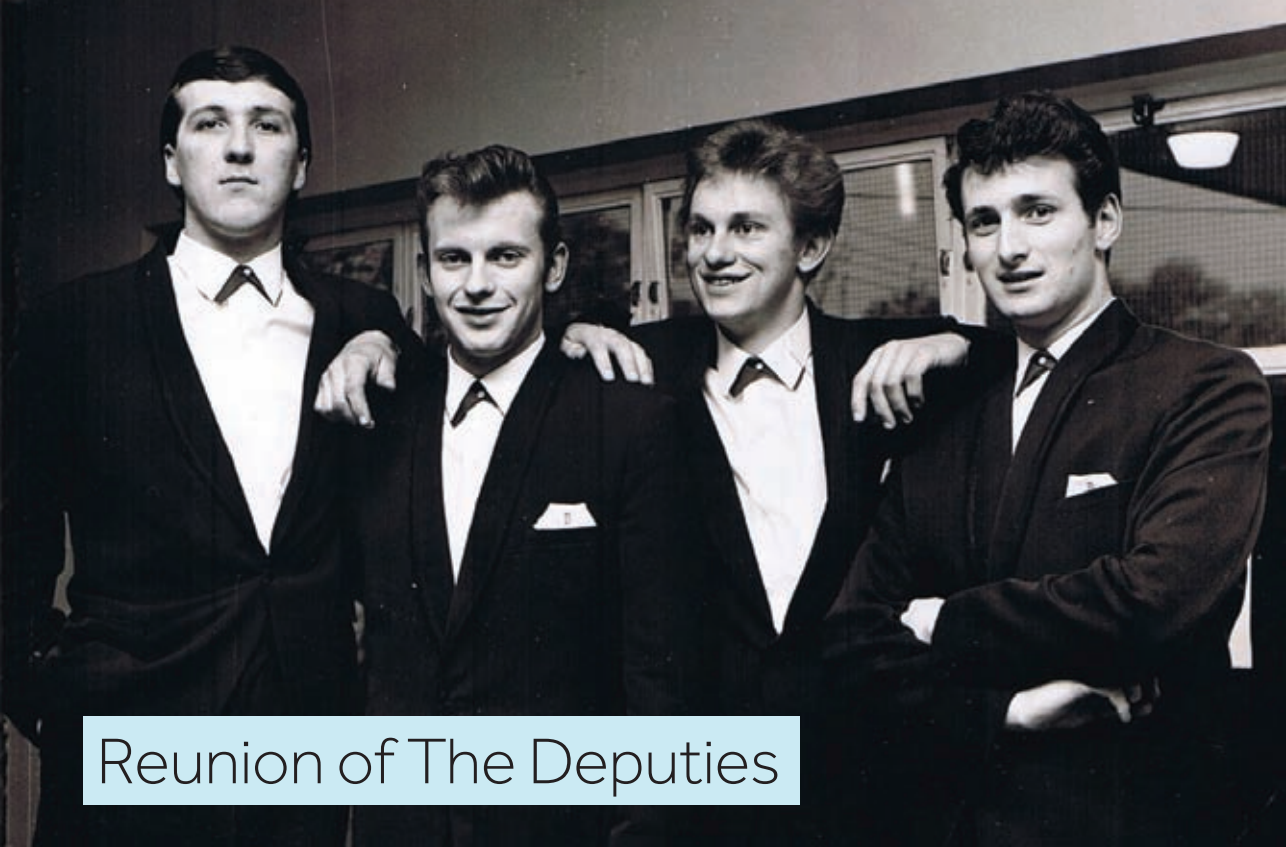


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Reunion of The Deputies

by Claire Cooper

Members of a 60s rock and roll band, who went from practising in the back of a garage in Cuckfield to taking to the stage at the London Palladium, were reunited in the village last month.

The Deputies - Ron Knight, now living in Vancouver, Geoff Hards, from Germany, Roger Hart, from Clayton, and Tony Wells, who still lives in the village - were reunited at the White Harte pub, where they enjoyed reminiscing about their rock and roll years and how they performed alongside some of the biggest stars of the time, including Dusty Springfield, The Hollies and Van Morrison.

"Tony formed the band and was its musical director," said Ron. "He and Geoff wrote most of the original material that we performed and Roger also wrote some 'instrumentals'.

"I was no great drummer but I could keep time, sang a bit and did back-up vocals to Geoff's lead."

"We practised like mad and played our first gigs at Ansty cricket club and then at The Dance, an event which moved around the local villages. The main band was the Consorts and we came in during the interval to play a bit of rock and roll.

"It was the Beatles era and British POP was king. We did mostly cover band stuff, singing hit parade songs with a mix of big ballads and American R&B."

As the band's reputation and following grew, so did the offers of work and The Deputies soon found themselves playing with big acts of the day, including The Searchers, The Hollies, Kenny Lynch, Manfred Mann, the Mind Benders, the Bachelors, Helen Shapiro, Kenny Ball and Dusty Springfield.

They also formed part of a variety tour in Germany. "That was exciting as it meant taking our first ever flight to a concert on one of the most up to date planes of the day," said Geoff. "We also did Sunday Night at the London Palladium, which was such a thrill! We loaded up coachfulls of kids from the Cuckfield youth club to be 'screamers' when we were on stage!" Ron added that the group also performed at several Debutante parties, including one at The Dorchester!

Despite success the band never quite made it to the 'big time'. "We maybe came close but then so did a lot of other very talented groups that we met along the way," said Ron. "The main thing is that we had fun, financed a hobby, spent time with a super group of lads, pocketed lifetime memories, and kept ourselves busy and out of trouble as a ragtag bunch of teenagers in turbulent times."





The power of voices

NO STRINGS ATTACHED

By Kate Fleming

No Strings Attached can be interpreted in a variety of ways in this colloquial language that we speak, but it's the Cuckfield-based a cappella group that has the spotlight and is at the forefront of our attention this month.

A cappella is Italian for 'in the manner of the chapel' and specifically group singing without instrumental sound, using voices to emulate instruments – hence No Strings Attached – not a guitar, cello, violin or banjo in sight!

This group is comprised of four men and two women; an unusual combination.

All experienced singers and musicians, Alex and John Sandford, Bonnie Flitney, Russ Braithwaite, Philip Purdie and David Spear provide tenor, bass, alto, soprano and falsetto voices respectively to create the complex close harmony that is the basis of their performances. Witnessing their rehearsal time was both enlightening and a privilege. The process revealed a musical democracy; no leaders, all working together to create the right sound. Each song, they tell me, naturally creates its own leader, and indeed it does. Discussion is continuous, work constantly in progress, working the intricacies of the combination of sound out as a group. Weaving the harmony with rhythm, syncopation, changes of key and always listening to each other with intensity and skill.

Their repertoire is eclectic – choosing the best out of everything. Classical, folk and pop, covering fifty years of song. While hauntingly reminiscent of sacred choral music and Gregorian chant, 'Oh blah dee, oh blah dah life goes on bra...' resounds with additional layers and a richness that takes it musically into another dimension, and we meet anew Desmond with his barrow in the market place, and Molly is, once again, up there singing with the band.

Non specialist logic and common sense tells one that instruments would support and nurture the human voice, but No Strings Attached contradict this thinking. On the contrary, they say, it is liberating for the singers, removing barriers with their audience and enabling the performer to make contact. In performance No Strings Attached do exactly this. They bond with their audience, creating a reciprocity that is centred in the symbiotic relationship of the sounds and man's love of rhythm, harmony and balance. No Strings Attached are talented performers with a genuine desire to entertain. They love what they do and this is infectious – we catch it whether we are in a church reliving our misspent youth to the sound of The Drifters' 'Save the Last Dance for Me', or at a beer festival relishing the polyphonic rendering of The Carpenters' 'Close to You'. The message is clear – enjoy our a cappella singing and just for now forget the trials and tribulations of everyday.

Recently they have performed for the third consecutive year, at the Crawley Folk Festival and last month gave a special performance for a member of The Flying Pickets at the Burgess Hill Summer Festival.

Watch out for their local gigs, especially their concert at Sackville College (Jacobean Almshouse) East Grinstead on 19th July as part of their fundraising, reflecting the group's ethos which supports charities.

So No Strings Attached are available for any kind of function – bespoke performances to suit your party, wedding, anniversary ... or whatever kind of celebration where quality a cappella singing would enhance your special occasion.

For more information email David Spear: davidspear@tiscali.co.uk



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Elated pupils

FROM THE MAYOR'S TABLE

By Mike Schlup

You may ask why, in the middle of summer, we have a photograph from bonfire night. Well I just wanted to share with you one of the fantastic perks of becoming Mayor of Cuckfield, namely an invitation from the Bonfire Society to light the fire. Thanks to James Miller for the great photo, and you'll find many more from the night on the Cuckfield Bonfire Society Facebook page.

Arguably one of the most important institutions in Cuckfield is Warden Park skool (only kidding, school). Warden Park has had a major influence on the lives of many Cuckfield residents whether they attended as pupils, have had children of their own at Warden Park or in many cases both. Of course the school reaches a large catchment area across Mid-Sussex but it is proud of its long connection with Cuckfield.

The total contribution by ISOC to Warden Park this year was £1,000 divided between The Friends of Warden Park, Forest House and the pupil entry for the Mayor's procession. Gillian Green from FOWP wrote to us to explain how they have used the ISOC donation. 'We have previously put your donations towards another minibus to transport students to our many sporting fixtures, a new sound system in the assembly hall and enrichment activities for our students. This year we are hoping to give a large donation to the school towards an Astroturf/3G sports pitch for use by our students and the community of Cuckfield and the surrounding villages.'

Forest House are regular supporters of the ISOC Senior Citizens Christmas Meal, with pupils helping out on the day. The donation from ISOC is used by them for various purposes as decided by the pupils themselves. A percentage is always kept in reserve to assist pupils from deprived backgrounds who may be in need of essential items such as footwear or sportswear.

Did you attend Warden Park? Why not help out your old school by taking part in this year's Mayoral campaign and maybe you could be the one lighting the bonfire! Email mikeschlup@gmail.com for more details.

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Open-plan living

DESIGN AT HOME

By Fiona Evans, Limited Editions

Open-plan living has become an ideal, a selling point for many. An open-plan kitchen incorporating a living and dining area, a huge sofa, a play area for the kids, a log burner and a massive TV. A way of life that is portrayed by glossy magazines, American sitcoms and kitchen design companies. A concept that, although portrayed for today's lifestyle, has interesting origins in the European Modern Movement which developed after the Great War 1914-18.

European architects associated with the Bauhaus movement, 1919-33 in Germany, were desperate to move away from Historical and Classical designs and on to a new machine age. Architects such as Le Corbusier, living in an age where planes and cars were becoming a common sight, looked to the future and, using machinery as inspiration in design, saw houses as machines to live in, replacing individual rooms with slick, light, flowing spaces. In America, Frank Lloyd Wright, inspired by the mid-western prairies, was a trail blazer for modern styling. He built his home, Falling Water 1937-9, linking the outside landscape with the interior by incorporating exterior rock formations and a waterfall with the open-plan rooms. The open-plan style went on to feature in many American homes, especially after World War II when Mid Century Modern Style evolved due to an increase in manufacturing industries, development of prefabrication and mass production. Architects such as Pierre Koenig built gleaming low cost glass and steel houses from ready-made factory components.

The Modern Style with its open-plan ideal and factory-made components was first seen in Britain following World War II. Based on European styling especially that of Le Corbusier.

Homes of the 60s and 70s featured living rooms that incorporated dining areas, kitchen/diners, L-shaped rooms and large windows to let in the maximum amount of daylight. Open-plan staircases let light through and fireplaces were a thing of the past. The architecture was controversial at the time as not all embraced the box like features but if you live in a home from this period you have a head start in creating your dream open-plan interior.

There are pros and cons to the living room/kitchen, here are some tips that might help:

- Pros:
- Fantastic social space
 - The large space suits hectic lives
 - The light and airy environment lifts mood
 - An ability to keep an eye on the kids while you're cooking
- Cons:
- Drifting cooking smells (could be combated by specialised paints that absorb odours)
 - Insufficient insulation a must
 - Solar gain through large windows/glass doors could make the interior too hot

Note: Thoughtful planning can solve the above cons.

Source: 'Modern' Jonathan Clancey

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Summer dessert

ON YOUR TABLE

Elderflower and Strawberry Eton Mess

Ingredients

Meringue:
175g caster sugar
3 egg whites
1 pinch of salt

Eton mess:
500g strawberries
500ml double cream
50ml elderflower cordial
1 vanilla pod, seeds scraped out

Happy children working in harmony!

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By Simon Dennis, head chef at The Rose & Crown

I know Wimbledon is now behind us but we are well into the summer and what better way to celebrate than creating a beautifully fresh (and slightly luxurious!) treat for dinner guests at your barbeque? This recipe is tried and tested and a favourite with my family and friends.



Method

To make the Meringue:

1. Preheat the oven to 110°C and line 2 trays with parchment paper.
2. Place the egg whites and a pinch of salt into a large mixing bowl and begin to whip with a whisk. As you whisk, add the sugar little by little so that, by the end of whisking, you have stiff whites which have all the sugar added by the time you are nearing the end of whisking.
3. Next, use a spatula to spread the whipped whites over the trays.
4. Once fully spread, transfer to the oven to dry out and crisp. This can take several hours but check it after the first hour, then every half hour or so thereafter depending on your oven. You can remove the meringue when it sounds hollow and brittle when you tap it.

To make the Eton Mess:

5. Place the cream in a mixer with a whisk attachment then whip gently, taking care not to over- whip. Add elderflower cordial, vanilla seeds and half the strawberries to the cream and stir in.
6. Break up the meringue into rough one-inch-sized bits and add most (but not all) of the meringue to the cream.
7. Finish the Eton Mess with some of the strawberries and a crunchy topping of meringue, then serve at once.

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As an insurer who understands the risks and rewards of living in the countryside, we realise that your home is more than simply bricks and mortar; it's where you raise your family, entertain your friends and keep some of your most treasured possessions. That's why we take the time to work closely with you to tailor your home and contents cover to your individual needs, so that your home and possessions are properly protected against the unexpected.

To help you protect the things you value, NFU Mutual has just launched a new insurance product package for those with high-value homes and contents worth over £100,000. Whether you have a contemporary home full of modern art or a listed manor house filled with antiques, we can help you correctly value and insure your home and its contents, together with any land or outbuildings attached to your home.

As the recent storms and floods highlighted, the true test of any insurance policy comes when you have to make a claim. Whilst relocating families is always a priority in situations like this, we also understand that

domestic pets, horses and even fine art and antiques may also need to be moved to a place of safety in the event of a major fire, storm or flood.

Water can ruin fine art and antiques, and items of value might need to be removed from the premises and placed into secure storage until the property has been dried out and repaired. In some cases this could take up to three years, particularly if the property is listed or requires complex repairs or restoration.

In the event of a claim, our strong local presence means we can respond to your requests and instructions quickly. We also have a specialist claims team on hand to help and support you through the claims process.

At a time when many businesses are moving out of towns and villages, NFU Mutual is committed to maintaining a local presence and providing a traditional face-to-face service where our customers and their families are known by their name and not just their policy number.

To celebrate the launch of our new policy for high value homes, and in recognition of our longstanding affinity with tea, we're giving away a Fortnum & Mason tea hamper containing two tins of loose-leaf tea, clotted cream thins, a Fortnum & Mason tea-strainer and a pretty china mug. To enter, all you have to do is email your name and address to competition@cuckfieldlife.co.uk with the subject marked as 'Hamper' and tell us the answer to the following question: Where was NFU Mutual founded?



Get in on the act

CUCKFIELD DRAMATIC SOCIETY

By David Tingley

Have you ever watched those 'making of' documentaries and thought it looks like fun being an actor? Or just been in the audience and secretly wished you could get up there on stage?

Well, Cuckfield resident Kirsty Bishopp thought exactly that and then, crucially, she did something about it!

"I literally just sent an email to the address on the Cuckfield Dramatic Society (CDS) website and said I was interested in being part of a future show," Kirsty told me. "The next thing I knew, I was meeting the cast after a performance of 'Murder in Company' last year."

Kirsty doesn't come from an acting background, she didn't study at RADA and isn't even particularly outgoing as a personality – but she knew she wanted to try it. She recently starred as Jane in CDS's production of a little-known play 'Anyone for Breakfast?'

When I asked her what the audition process was like, she said it wasn't too daunting. "On the night I auditioned there was a group of about 12 people all reading through the script. Some knew what parts they were reading for but others (like me) didn't mind. It was nice and informal; fun almost!"

Harriët Sheldon, the director, cast Kirsty as Jane soon after and rehearsals started two evenings a week in the room at the back of The White Hart.

Kirsty, who works shifts in Brighton as a surgical nurse, said that, although the rehearsal schedule was quite hectic, she loved the process of refining the performance over three months. "Didn't your husband mind?", I asked. "Steve was very supportive of me trying this. He's been great. I don't think he felt getting an evening to watch a film he wanted to see was too much of a chore!

"When we got closer to the show week a third

practice was introduced at the Queen's Hall using the stage. I found that really exciting," Kirsty explained. She also admitted to her phone being full of voice recordings of the script, which she used to test herself right up until the last week of rehearsals.

But when that week came and the audience walked in, Kirsty found that she got less and less nervous as she closed each performance. "My favourite bit was when they laughed at the jokes," she went on. "The cast and crew work really hard to put on these productions and it was so nice to be part of it. When the final applause comes we all accept it with gratitude, but really it's a joy to be part of a local society like CDS."



Cuckfield Dramatic Society's 'Anyone for Breakfast' cast line up



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Biosphere reserve

VILLAGE GREEN

By Margaret Tyzack More, Cuckfield Local 'CUCKFIELD THINKS GLOBAL ACTS LOCAL' is stated loud and clear on both black and green editions of our popular Cuckfield Local jute carriers.

On the global front, there is much to celebrate about the latest news from the Brighton and Lewes Downs Biosphere. It has been designated by UNESCO as an international site of excellence demonstrating how we might live better in the future, in greater harmony with local environment, by bringing people and nature closer together. The United Nations recognition of it as a "biosphere reserve" ranks it alongside Mt Olympus and the Amazon.

The Biosphere lies between the rivers Adur and Ouse taking in countryside, coast, sea, towns and city, the centre point being Castle Hill on the Downs behind Brighton. This is unique chalk grassland habitat and the Downs here give nature gain in the natural process of filtering water through the chalk into the aquifer below, providing Brighton with its good drinking water. Do find out more if you wish by searching for "Brighton Biosphere" on your computer. There are several sites to be found. The Isle of Man is to put in a bid to become part of UNESCO's world wide network of biospheres by 2015.

Some of you will have visited the Scarecrow Festival at Holy Trinity School. Cuckfield Nature Village had a very successful presence there selling flowers and plants to support birds, pollinators, butterflies and water creatures. Our £61.12 in donations was passed on to the NSPCC and we were able to give the school foxgloves for the woods and water plants for the dipping pond.

Whilst we were there we met with lovely Rebecca Harman, who runs Smash Activity Club for children on Saturdays at Holy Trinity. Some of the activities involve pond dipping and woodcraft in the wonderful nature-oriented grounds. So good to know that our children are having the opportunity to meet and adventure with wildlife and their habitat not just in school time. Smash runs a Summer Holiday Camp at the school too.

Good news on the Market front. Many of you have really got the message about recycling the hard plastic lids and are bringing them to us at the Market. In June we had the best collection yet at just over 5kg and that's not counting the milk bottle tops! We are doing well and making a name for ourselves.

MBA Polymers, to whom we send the lids, had an excellent article about the local group in Cuckfield, how we collect at the market and about Cuckfield Local. They included a great photo of our table at the Market too. Keep up the good work Cuckfield.

Read the blog article at <http://bit.ly/VFjyMJ>

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ANSTY SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB FAMILY FUN DAY

AUGUST 25TH BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY FROM 12NOON UNTIL 4PM

AT THE RECREATION GROUND, DEAKS LANE, ANSTY, RH17 5AS.

FREE ENTRY, FREE PARKING AND LOTS OF FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Gun dog display, owls, archery, wellie throwing, pony rides, Punch & Judy, plate smashing, coconut shy, children's races and fun dog show.

This year for the first time we will be holding a children's painting competition, 3 subjects; pets, still life or landscape in age groups 3-5 yrs., 6-10 and 11-15. There is no limit to the number of entries and winners will receive painting sets. Please bring your paintings along on the day with your name, age and contact details on the back. The competition will be judged by members of the local Adventurer's Art Club.

Hog roast, hot dogs, beer tent, teas/coffees and cakes, ice-creams.

Classic cars, static engines and spinning demonstrations.

There will also be numerous side shows and stalls, a giant raffle, tombola and lots more.

Everyone is welcome, please come along and help us raise the funds we need for re-building.



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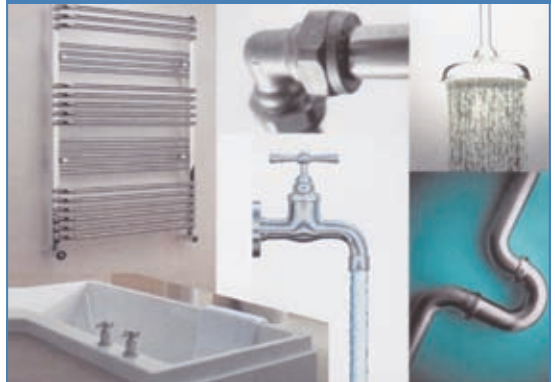
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What's on this month

AT QUEEN'S HALL

AND ELSEWHERE

Regular weekly classes (many are drop-in classes):

Monday

- 11am Weigh In – Weigh Out
- 12.30pm Stretch Tone
- 4pm Irish Dance
- 7.30pm Haywards Heath & District Canine Society - Dog Training

Tuesday

- 9am Tinkerbells – Making Music Magic for children from 6 months to 4 years
- 3pm Codanza
- 7pm Pilates
- 7.30pm Dog Training

Wednesday

- 10am Stroke Communications Group
- 12noon Line Dancing – Live Wire School of Dance
- 4pm Codanza
- 8pm Best of Ballroom Cuckfield Dance Club

Thursday

- 9am Tumblotots
- 9.30am Pilates
- 7.30pm Line Dancing

Friday

- 9am Tinkerbells – Making Music Magic for children from 6 months to 4 years

July

- 24th **Referendum Voting Station** for Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan 7am–10pm

August

- 5th **Tiny Soccer Stars Summer Fun Session**
- 8th **Life Line Screening** 8am–5pm Medical Health Screening Event
- 12th **Tiny Soccer Stars Summer Fun Session**

For further information on regular weekly classes & monthly events please contact Jane Forester at Cuckfield Parish Council on 01444 451610 or email: admin@cuckfield.gov.org

July

- 20th **Warninglid Open Gardens (NGS)** 2-6pm – 10 gardens open in village. £5 combined ticket (<http://bit.ly/1periSw>)

- 26th **The Adventurers Art Club Annual Exhibition** –3rd 10am – 7pm, except Sunday 3rd August 10am–3.30pm. The club is a mixture of professional, semi-professional and amateur artists from all over Sussex, using many different mediums to express their work. It meets every Thursday evening at the school hall in Cuckfield with professional demonstrations throughout the year. The annual exhibition is always in Lindfield. Friendly club that is aimed at all adult ages and keen to welcome new members whether they wish to exhibit or not. Admission 50p (Valerie Harvey 01444 444704)

August

- 1st **The Merchant of Venice** – Cuckfield Recreation Ground 7.30pm. Gates open 6pm for picnic. Once again the Rain or Shine Theatre Company is back by popular demand to perform for us 'The Merchant of Venice' al fresco style. Tickets available from Parish Council offices: Queen's Hall
- 9th **Cuckfield Local Food Market** 9.30am – 12.30pm Behind Mansell McTaggart
- 24th **Outdoor cinema at Wakehurst Place.** Doors open 6.30pm, film starts 8pm. Dirty Dancing (12) (www.lunacinema.com)
- 25th **Outdoor cinema at Wakehurst Place.** Doors open 6.30pm, film starts 8pm. Gravity (12A) (www.lunacinema.com)
- 30th **Cuckfield Royal Observer Corps nuclear bunker** –31st open weekend (Phillipa Malins 01444 452307)

Visit the ROC bunker

There's still time to visit Royal Observer Corps underground bunker in Cuckfield this summer.

Open days are being held on 30th & 31st August and 13th September.

Last month we stated in error that the bunker was privately owned. It actually belongs to Cuckfield Parish Council and was de-commissioned in 1991, the bunker has been restored by a group of volunteers. It was originally post number 50 of 1,500 originally built across the UK in the 1960s.

To book a visit, contact Phillipa Malins at Cuckfield Museum on 01444 452307.

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For those buyers wishing to stay ahead of the game this year, don't forget to follow us on Twitter @mansellcuck for daily updates and news of properties about to come onto the market prior to general release.

Richard Butler MNAEA, Director
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