



Next Editors: Stephen & Kate Banks: huntonherald@outlook.com
All items for the next edition of the Herald to the Editors by 15th May

Meet the Neighbours

If you're familiar with Facebook and social media, you'll probably know about "hashtags"... a kind of shorthand, to get your message across. With hashtags in mind, I could save on words and simply write: #lovewhereilive. It would sum-up nicely how I felt after our evening at the village club "meeting the village" or at "freshers' night" as it had also been called. Having lived in Hunton for 12 years, and had family here for 45 years before that, I thought I knew the village pretty well. I certainly needed no convincing of what a fabulously friendly and active village it is... but Friday night was the perfect reminder and an eye-opener too. Not only were around 20 groups and organisations represented but more than 125 people turned up to mingle, enjoy pizza and find out more about the village and each other.

If you want to get active, there are plenty of options: running, football, cricket and bowls clubs, as well as a walking group and yoga classes. Other, perhaps less obvious, forms of exercise include bell-ringing and litter-picking – both of which offer an extra dimension on top of physical exercise. I enjoy a good litter-pick and am the proud owner of a hi-viz and "pickers" but I had very little knowledge of bell-ringing until Susan Clements talked me through it and was kind enough to demonstrate with a scale model she had brought to the club. It was fascinating stuff.

Gardening club could fall into various categories... but is certainly an active and friendly group, meeting twice during the winter for an informal supper as well as organising visits to local gardens and farms throughout the warmer months. The club welcomes novices and experienced gardeners and there is no membership fee. It's definitely a club I'd enjoy. Other, less physical, groups include a book club, "needles & natter" as well as a "ladies group" – formerly the WI.

The benefits of many of the clubs and groups are clear... while others offer a chance to give something back to our lovely village. Litter-picking and being part of the church working party are two easy ways to get involved and make a difference – and there were also representatives on hand to talk about the Parish Council, becoming a Friend of St Mary's, taking part in Speedwatch, Neighbourhood Watch or even the Hunton Herald!

It would be easy to list all the clubs, groups and initiatives – and they are a wonderful thing – but perhaps the best thing about the evening was simply the sense of community. People of all ages, some new to the village, some "old hands" and others who'd lived here for ages but who had never met before. It was noted that, while the adults chatted inside the club, a number of children had teamed up and were playing in the car park. This seemed to epitomise what the event was all about; getting together and inspiring future generations to do the same.

A massive thank you and congratulations must go to Sue Pinks & Wendy Simmons, for masterminding such a brilliant event (a slice of pizza was very effective bait!) as well as those who came to represent their clubs and groups. I'm delighted we went – though slightly regretting what I signed up for... Running club, here we come!

Jennifer Dixon

Your Local Contacts:		
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Maidstone Police 690690 or 101
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Village Hall Booking: www.huntonvillagehall.co.uk
Pond and Tree Warden: Sam Andrews	huntontreewarden@gmail.com	Huntonwatch: huntonwatch@gmail.com 07907 019996
Rector: Revd. Lorna Faulkner*	747570	'Potholes' Hotline (KCC) 03000 418181
Hon Associate Rector: Revd. David Jones	741474*	Hunton Ladies: Chris Summersgill c.a.summersgill@btinternet.com
Churchwarden: Iain Simmons	820875	PCSO - none
	Ishuntonchurchwarden@btinternet.com	Helen Grant MP helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk 0207 219 7107
Community Wardens Team	07811 271021	Village Club: Roger Lee: roger.c.lee@btinternet.com 820210
Hunton Bell Ringers: Lavinia Thompson	07885 763071	Reporting HGVs huntontrafficreporting@gmail.com
<i>*not available on Fridays</i>		

Contact details for other village clubs and organisations are available at www.huntonparishcouncil.org.uk

Parish Council Contacts	
Parish Clerk: Sharon Goodwin - 681238, huntonpc@goolemail.com	Chairman: David Heaton - 820678, dhhuntonpc@gmail.com
Cllr Jonny Goddard - 820096, jonny@cheveneyfarm.co.uk	Cllr Tony Stanbridge - 820721, tshuntonpc@gmail.com
Cllr Annette Trought - 820448, annette@trought.com	Cllr Mike Summersgill - 820429, mshuntonpc@btinternet.com
Cllr Iain Simmons - 820875, ishuntonpc@btinternet.com	Cllr Jean Fuller - 07738 935630, jfhuntonpc@outlook.com

Diary Dates	
Thurs 2 nd May- Parish Council Elections;	Sat 4 th May - Plants Produce and refreshments at Hunton Village Club-12 noon to 4pm;
Fri 10 th May - Church & Churchyard Working Party, 9am to 12 noon;	Sat 18 th May - Hunton school Fayre, 12 - 2pm;
Mon 20 th May - Annual Parish Meeting at the village hall, 7:30pm;	Sun 7 th July - Strawberry tea "Berries and Bells" at St Mary's Church;
Sat 31 August – Beer Festival at Hunton Club.	
Check out www.huntonparishcouncil.org.uk/events-list for the latest events. If you would like to add an event, email huntonpc@gmail.com	

Pastoral Letter

May is here at last!
'See! The winter is past;
the rains are over and gone.
Flowers appear on the earth;
the season of singing has come...'

Song of Songs 2:11-12

I always find May to be a hopeful month. It's when Spring begins to turn to Summer. Those of us sick and tired of trekking our dogs through cold, thick, sticky, mud rejoice in the return of firmer ground and cleaner floors; we can turn the heating off until October; the green-fingered among us will see our gardens flourish once more; the evenings are lighter; we have two Bank Holidays in the same month! What's not to love? No wonder our ancestors welcomed this month with feasting and dancing. It must have marked some relief for them - the frosts were gone, food was more plentiful, less darkness, less sleeping, more time to enjoy the company of others.

I did a bit of internet research (always guaranteed to be an eye-opener!) and there are so many things to celebrate in May! Here's a selection of my favourites...

May 1: World Laughter Day; May 4: Intergalactic Star Wars Day; May 10: Clean Up Your Room Day;
May 15: International Day of Families; May 16: International Pickle Day; May 25: World Otter Day;
May 30: Water a Flower Day.

In the church, on May 19th, we'll be celebrating too as we mark the festival of Pentecost. We'll hear again the account recorded in the book of Acts that describes how the Spirit of God was poured out on the first believers with tongues of Holy fire... You are welcome, as always, to come along and join us as we discover what these events can mean for us today.

Have a look for yourself - see if there's something you can celebrate this month. And if there isn't? Make something up - and invite your neighbours! Warm May blessings to you all,

Lorna

Rubbish Falls!

This time last year we collected 82 sacks of rubbish, 8 tyres, a child's bike, a lorry wheel, a wide selection of furniture and some building materials, so we are delighted to report that this time we saw a significant improvement with "only" about 45 sacks collected together with a few car parts and a metal frame for a temporary road sign!

Apart from relying on MBC to remove one sack of building material and a dead badger, I do not believe that we were less diligent this time, indeed, thanks to the efforts of our volunteer group, we managed to cover some less well travelled roads not usually addressed. We can only conclude that either more of you are clearing rubbish quietly through the intervening months, MBC are doing a better job with their mechanised road sweepers or that drivers are throwing less away from their vehicles – whichever it is, thank you all!

It is not a pleasant job picking up other people's rubbish littering our roads, so we are grateful to all who volunteer to do so. Whilst we do gain satisfaction from seeing the roadsides clearer for a while, we are also grateful to those kind drivers who slow down, leave a safe space and even shout encouragement as they pass us. Sadly, there are a small number who remind us why MBC consider the roads in Hunton as being too dangerous to collect litter on and we would be grateful if they could be more considerate in the future.

Finally, our thanks to Clock House Farm who continue to help us by removing the rubbish collected and to the Parish Council for support in funding the bags and equipment we use.

Andrea and James Forster

Annual Parish Meeting – Monday 20th May

The meeting will take place at 7.30pm in the village hall and all residents are invited to come to this informal evening. We are delighted to welcome a representative of Marden History Group, who will be giving a presentation. There will be an open session where you can raise any issues or ask your Parish, Borough and County Councillors any questions you may have. Local groups and clubs will also present short reports on their activities over the last year, so please do come and find out what has been happening in the Hunton community. Light refreshments will be served from 7:00pm.

Plants and Produce Saturday 4th May

Thanks to those who have already donated a super range of house & garden plants including vegetables and herbs plus various plant containers. These will be on sale at Hunton Club from 12 noon to 4pm on Saturday 4th May. There will also be local produce including rhubarb as well as chutney, marmalade, jams & honey.

The bar will be open selling local real ale and other drinks. Refreshments including toasties, teas and coffees plus tempting home-made cakes will be available to eat in the club and you can take a selection away for treats later. Please bring cash if you can and park at the Village Hall then enjoy the short walk down the footpath to the club.

Look forward to seeing you!

Lesley Lee

Save the Date!

Hunton Village Club will be welcoming Peter Griffiths on the evening of Tuesday 24 September. Peter will deliver his extremely interesting and amusing talk on aviation entitled 'Sextant to Sat Nav (with a fear of heights!)

This is an open meeting and all are welcome whether club members or not. Save the date and watch this space for further details.

Hunton School

The days are lengthening and everyone increasingly wants to be outside. Despite the challenging weather at the end of March, our Netball Team competed magnificently in the Kent Teach Games. We are always so proud at how well our teams play, compared to larger schools who only select their few best players, therefore leaving many of their children out of team sports. At Hunton not only is everyone able to represent the school but the children know each other's strengths and playing skills so well. Watching them beat a much larger school 8-0 was incredible. Although we adults were wet and cold the children resiliently played on. Well done Hunton!



Our wonderful PTFA organised an Easter Egg Hunt for all the children. We managed to dodge the showers and the children were so excited. It is without a doubt that having the support of the PTFA and parents who are willing and able to give up their time, enables our children to have these special experiences. Thank you to everyone who helped.



Hornet warning

An invasion of Asian hornets is threatened in Britain but, with the help of Marden Wildlife Group, Hunton is joining the fight against them. Traps have been provided by the group for us to place around the village and Sue Pinks is identifying suitably spread-out sites. The traps ensure that queen hornets can be trapped as they emerge from hibernation and before nests are established.

The Asian hornet differs from our native hornet. The native hornet is mostly yellow with an orangish brown head and legs whereas the Asian hornet is mostly black with yellow tipped legs, and a yellow stripe across its abdomen and a yellow back end. They are smaller than the European hornet. If you see one, you must inform Defra. There is a new app called the Asian Hornet Watch. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is trying to prevent a nationwide Asian hornet invasion, currently through eradication of individuals and nests.

There was a sharp increase in UK sightings in 2023, with at least 22 confirmed reports so far, five nests were found in the Maidstone area. The problem with these insects, also known as the murder hornet, is that they prey on other insects, most especially the honeybee and other essential pollinators. They are a real threat to the survival of all of our bee colonies. The hornets raid honeybee hives by sitting outside them and capturing workers as they go in and out. They chop them up and feed the thorax to their young; nature can be very violent!

Sue Pinks

A Breed Apart

We couldn't have chosen two of the most opposite of pedigree sheep to keep than the Southdown, a lowland breed and the Herdwicks an upland Lake District sheep. The Herdwicks are believed to have been brought over by the Vikings and are not related to any other native breed of sheep. As a rare breed they were rescued by Beatrix Potter, which is why we name ours after Beatrix Potter characters.

Both breeds graze grass of course, like most sheep, but if the Herdwicks had a choice they would be in the hedges and 'browsing' on a mixture of woody forage.

Given heavy rain the Herdwicks with their long waterproof coats will seek shelter, I think they are clever and resourceful whereas the Southdowns will stand it out (stock still) in torrential downpours.

The wool is different on both these breeds. The Southdowns appear to hold the moisture in the wool and if we corralle them a while after rain, the Southdown's wool readily saturates your trouser legs. The Herdwicks are completely dry to the touch and strangely during lambing where the Southdowns are born wet and even after a few hours can still feel clammy and damp; the Herdwicks are almost born dry.

The Southdown sheep are a shearer's nightmare, they need shearing all over, face and feet included. The Herdwicks faces and feet are more like hair and apart from the tail (not docked as Southdown sheep are) their long wool covers just the neck and body. The Southdown fleeces are light and delicate to fold and roll and one has to make the best they can to get it into a neat ball when stacking them into the sheets for the Wool Board. This wool goes via the Wool Board and onward to make Southdown Duvets (for which we get a premium on top of the Wool Board price). The Herdwicks fleece is long, heavy and dense and shears off easily in one piece like a thick rug and it is easy to see why the wool goes for thick coats and blankets.

The Herdwick feet are springy and long and good for climbing and jumping. They have hair around the hooves making them look wide at the foot as if they have paws, which I guess is to keep the heat in during the bleak weather on the high hills. They are unfortunately able to leap a low fence for greener grass the other side, but the upside is that they are easy to load in the trailer as they quite like the clamber up a hill however small.

The Herdwicks are noticeably more watchful and will see you coming before you see them and often stand and stare, mesmerised by whatever it is you are up to whether it is sheep related or not.

Sue Heaton

Hunton Village Club Opening Hours

Wednesdays 8 – 11pm; Fridays 6.30 – 10.30pm; Sundays 8 – 10.30pm

A Varied Programme for Hunton Ladies

Hunton Ladies enjoyed their meeting at the end of March as we undertook something a little different. We decided to make an Easter Floral arrangement. This meant us all watching a demonstration first then having a go ourselves. Daffodils were in abundance and foliage dominated a corner of the club. We used willow, pittosporum and spotted laurel to name just a few varieties. At the end of the evening 15 arrangements were admired, all fairly similar but with individual touches. Luckily all were transported home safely afterwards.

Hunton Ladies meet from 8pm on the last Wednesday of the month at the club. Activities have included learning to crochet, card making, water colour painting, weaving and spinning, games evenings as well as listening to talks from such people as aromatherapists, forensic workers and hearing about local history. The programme for April was a talk from two local doctors talking about their charity work in Africa. So, in fact, just about anything works!

Hunton Primary School May Fayre. Saturday 18th May 12-2pm

Come along to our May Fayre, everyone welcome. There will be lots of different stalls and games to keep you entertained, along with a raffle with some amazing prizes, a BBQ and refreshments. Donations of new/used toys and games and other raffle prizes are always welcome. If you have anything to donate please email pta@hunton.kent.sch.uk and we would be happy to collect or alternatively drop it into the school. Please come and support the village school.

Good Luck, Lance!

At the time of writing, Lance Parry has raised £1,570 for Save The Children; and has just £190 to raise before he runs the London Marathon in aid of the charity.

The marathon is at the end of April and the entirety of Lance's training has been running in and around Hunton. Together with the Hunton Run Club, he has been trudging through the muddy countryside throughout this very wet winter.

His fund raising started with a light-hearted charity quiz night which Lance, a rather nervous quiz master, conducted. The quiz, attended by more than 70 people, and a raffle raised an impressive £494 in one evening! He is very grateful for the patience and generosity of everyone who attended and participated in the quiz and donated.

The Hunton Run Club is free to join for all. The members run every Tuesday at 6:30pm for a distance of 5km (3.1 miles) at a steady pace. If you're interested in joining, please do contact Adam on 07766 566449.

Up the Hunton!

Hunton FC men's team is having one of its most successful seasons in recent history. The team secured a 3 – 1 victory against Gillingham Anchorians playing at Hunton on April 13th. Three days earlier they had won the Sittingbourne and Milton Cup by beating Danson FC (a team from Crayford), also 3 – 1, at Chatham FC stadium and in March at the same stadium, they secured the Centenary Cup with a convincing 6 -0 victory over Canon 24, a team from Gillingham. If they win their remaining two league fixtures the team could win the Rochester and District league division 2. Up the Hunton!

St Mary's Church Working Parties

Thanks to those volunteers who met to prepare St Mary's Church and the churchyard for Easter. If you can give up any time to help at working parties the team will be happy to make you welcome. Volunteers decide which tasks they take on and we stop for a sociable drink and nibble break mid-morning.

So far, there are three weddings at the church booked this summer as well as a 'Berries and Bells' event on Sunday 7th July. In the hope that the church and churchyard will look their best for each occasion there will be several working parties. We meet at 9am and stop when we think we have done everything needed or at 12 noon. If you think you can help please contact Lesley lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com so she can organise enough refreshments. The dates we will meet are Friday 10th May, Friday 7th June, Friday 21st June and Saturday 6th July.

Benefice Service Rota – May 2024

Church	5th	12th	19th	26th
Coxheath 11:00 am	Communion (1+2+3)+ APCM <i>LF</i>	Morning Worship (2+3) <i>DJ</i>	Communion (1+2+3) <i>LF</i>	All-age worship <i>BP/LF</i>
East Farleigh 9:30 am	Morning Worship <i>CD</i>		APCM at 9am followed by Communion Service <i>LF</i>	
West Farleigh 9:30 am		Communion <i>CD</i>		Morning Worship <i>SE</i>
Hunton 9:30 am	Communion <i>DJ</i>		Family Service <i>DJ</i>	
Linton 9:30 am		Morning Worship <i>BP</i>		Communion <i>LF</i>
Midweek Services				
Coxheath - Every Thursday; Holy Communion, 10:00 am; Linton - Holy Communion last Wednesday of each month, 12.00, followed by lunch				
DJ – David Jones, BP - Becky Parnham, LF – Lorna Faulkner; CD – Clinton Davis; SE – Sue Elliott; BW – Bertie Woodward				

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