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REGRETTABLE REDUNDANCY AS CLUB MEETS WITH 'HARD TIMES'

As reported in our last edition, the Hunton Village Club is not at present enjoying the best of financial health! Membership is at its lowest level for some considerable time and those regulars who do give admirable support are all too thin on the ground.

The most regrettable and sad outcome has been that the club has had no alternative other than to make the post of Club Steward redundant. Rose Mitchell has been the club's longstanding steward and will be greatly missed. Rose has been a stalwart of the club for many years and has served the club through a number of "hard times" during this period. Club and Committee members have asked that we express their gratitude to Rose and wish her well for the future.

It is the intention of the Club Committee to carry on business in as normal a way as possible through voluntary assistance by the Committee and hopefully Club Members.

The Committee hopes to see many old and new members in the club in the future. The survival of the club, in Hunton for around 100 years, now depends upon this action and any help that any of our readers can give. Please contact Doug Redfarn one of the "Local Contacts" in the Herald - The number is 01622 820495

By the time this edition goes to print an Extraordinary General Meeting will have been held and hopefully we will be able to report on some better news in our following edition.

Hello from David and Sue Heaton

We have just joined a team of villagers in helping to produce the Hunton Herald. Under the guiding hand of Les we will be learning the ropes of sub editing. The hardest task yet has been to write our introduction!

It is now 10 years since we moved in to Barn Hill from West Malling and still think how lucky we are to be here. Both have spent most of our lives living and working in Kent. David's work is allied to agriculture/horticulture and Sue nursing.

Our hobbies include the garden and we took part in the Hunton Open Gardens last year. We love walking and are usually roaming the peak district or the Yorkshire Dales in our winter holiday, and sailing in the summer, when we are not in the garden.

Applause Concert - A Brazilian Band

A date for the diary- not to be missed! The next Applause concert in the Village Hall is on Saturday 1 April. 'Caratinga' is a Brazilian band and the organisers anticipate an evening of warm, rhythmical music that is unlikely to have been experienced in Hunton before. Tickets are due to go on sale shortly at £9 (£6 for youngsters of school age) to include food at the interval. More details in the March issue.

Note to Hunton Herald advertisers

Would advertisers please note that, due to uncertainties regarding the continuance of the Herald late last year, which have now been largely resolved, the adverts will not be appearing until the April issue. Adverts will still appear for 12 issues! We are on target to raise nearly £2000. Some of this will be used to keep the Herald going, although the majority will be divided for good causes in the village. In January 2006, £500 was donated to school. Other suggestions for donations include tree planting, the church organ and cricket club projects. Please let the editor know if you have any other ideas.

Your Local Contacts:

Parish Council Chairman: Roger Sawtell	820731	Village Club Doug Redfarn	820495
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Clerk to Parish Council: David Swan	814445
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Village Hall Booking: Jackie Crooks	820226
Maidstone Police:	608186	Under-5s Playgroup:	741951
Pond and Tree Warden: Anne Bishop	820683	Pre-School Supervisor: Pippa Fordham	746829
Rector: Revd Peter Walker	747570	Neighbourhood Watch:	608173
Associate Rector: Revd Ruth Bierbaum	743866**	'Potholes' concern (MBC): Adrian Hygate	0845 824 7800
also: Revd David Jones	741474**	Churchwarden: Alison Ellman-Brown	820288
Hon PCC Secretary: Nicky Grainger	813527	supported by Joy McLoughlin	820551
		Organist: Philip Moore	749356

**not available on Fridays

Dates for Diaries:

Council Freighter Visits The next series of Maidstone Borough Council Freighter visits for heavy refuse will be:
Saturday 4th March, 07.45am to 08.45am
Saturday 22nd April, 07.45am to 08.45am both at the Village Hall car park.

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

JESUS HAS A PERFECT PLAN FOR EACH OF US

Dear Friends,

'4.15pm sharp in my study' said the school chaplain to all the boys' in my class. It was time for the annual Confirmation classes to begin. I had known that they were coming - the date was fixed in my mind. I wasn't going to go for I had a train to catch at 4pm and I didn't want to miss that - I wanted to go home. As I sprinted towards the station (for I was late for the train) I heard God say: 'now you know that you shouldn't be getting that train, you know where you are to be at 4.15pm' - well, it was something like that! I literally 'turned around' and headed for the chaplain's study, I was 14 years of age. In that one moment my life was to change forever.

Yes, I had been attending the local church as a choirboy and altar server, but had never been baptised as a baby, nor had I thought much about it. Some weeks later I was baptised by the school chaplain in the nearby church, and four days later was Confirmed by the Bishop of Lewes. There were about ten boys confirmed that day. 'You must all go home now' said the chaplain, 'and think about what has happened to you today'.

It was about a year later that I heard the gentle voice in my heart, a voice that I now knew, with the prompting within me to pray that I would offer myself to be trained for the ordained ministry of the church. I rebelled! It's a long story, but you know how the story ended! Now in my 26th year of ministry I remember those boyhood days as if they were yesterday.

Now the time has come for others to consider beginning Confirmation classes. I will be running classes for adults (it's never too late) weekly beginning on Sunday afternoon, February 26th. Ruth will also be running classes for the younger folk using the 'youth Alpha' programme.

On Sunday May 7th the actual Confirmation service will take place in the evening. If you are interested to attend these classes or know of someone who may be, please contact me. Not all or any will necessarily be ordained by being confirmed but it will mean a new commitment in the service of the Master, Jesus who does have a perfect plan for each of us. 'Thy Will be done', we pray it regularly; is this not what we want?

'I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope' (Jeremiah 29:11)

With my prayers,

PETER

RADIO 4'S 'YOU AND YOURS' EXPOSES ASBESTOS COWBOYS

Rogues and cowboy firms who "commercially abuse" property owners like St Mary's Church, Hunton, taking advantage of fears over asbestos and quoting non-essential clean-up bills of over £100,000, have been attacked on national radio.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's "You & Yours" programme, Sue Haydock of the Rochester Diocese said: "Church and volunteer organisations need to be aware of this potentially huge market for these rogue operators."

The train of events which led to St Mary's abrupt closure in early September were outlined to listeners by the Rector, the Rev. Peter Walker and parochial church councillor David Way, as part of a serious airing of the many worrying issues surrounding the current asbestos regulations.

In the 20-minute programme, the BBC presenter drew views on Hunton's plight from others closely involved with asbestos, including Maidstone's environmental health officer and the Health and Safety Executive.

Asbestos Watchdog, a body offering free advice, reported on dealing with hundreds of varying cases where "misleading and frightening" quotations had been given totalling millions of pounds.

David Way said: "The programme clearly exposed the occurrence of commercial exploitation of fear of asbestos and ignorance of the regulations. It must have enlightened many and helped some who may now be able to avoid the trauma endured by Hunton."

PARENTS PARKING: A CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Alarm has been voiced over parents parking badly outside Hunton village school which could prove a danger to passing motorists and young pedestrians.

Parish councillors at their January meeting discussed ways to overcome the problem such as writing to the school and asking the head to make a polite request to parents to be more careful when parking to drop off and collect their children.

Clerk David Swan said that a previous request to the highway authorities to install yellow parking restriction lines had failed. But borough councillors felt a new approach should be made.

It was felt that a site meeting should be arranged with the school to be attended by councillor Lorraine Redfarn who is actively involved with the Church of England school.

A police suggestion has previously been made for yellow lines. PC Gary Shaw reported to the council that an alternative might be to erect black and white plastic posts with reflectors or some other form of bollard or barrier on the pavement near the school entrance on to West Street to deter motorists from parking there.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir

Like so many other folk, I am sure, living in Hunton I have just read the Downs Mail, in particular the page showing Parish Council snippets that give the most recent discussions held. I was very pleased to see that many of our neighbouring Parish Councils have embraced the Police sponsored Speedwatch scheme, but not Hunton Parish Council. The article indicates that our Parish Council would prefer to rely on police patrols. I suppose they may have a point, but it would be useful to know how they reached that decision. I think they are pursuing a pious hope. The police do not have the resources to do this, so the speeding traffic, particularly through West Street, will continue to spoil the environment we live in, and be a threat to all that use that road. Perhaps the Parish Council could reconsider, or make site visits between 6.30am and 9am; from 3.30pm to 7.30pm during the week and virtually anytime over the weekend. I have mentioned in previous letters via your worthy paper that West Street embraces the sports field, the village hall, the church, the school and the Almshouses. Many of the existing 40mph signs have been damaged and as a consequence are not obvious to drivers.

I know that the KCC are considering imposing a 30mph limit on Kent villages. I do hope that this will arrive in Hunton with enforcement measures soon.

I cannot finish without mentioning the condition of the woods at the top of Hunton Hill. I need not take up room in your paper describing the appalling mess on both sides of the road in the woods for all to see. I am sure everyone has seen it. Please can something be done to clean it up? We used to have a band of worthy volunteers to do this aided by John Scott's tractor and trailer, alas no more.

Ron Porter

(Resident and Former Clerk to the Parish Council)

PARISHIONERS TO PARTICIPATE IN PARISH PLAN

Hunton parishioners are to be asked for their input into a Parish Plan to give a clear vision of how they see the village developing in the future, say 20 or 30 years' time. A variety of issues may affect any plans from traffic, transport and the local environment to housing schemes, crime, safety and youth provision.

Parish councillors discussed the possibility of formulating a Plan but agreed initially to invite a neighbouring council, such as Boxley, who have already completed their own publication, to attend a future meeting to explain their experiences.

Parish Plans aim to involve local people to identify the community's needs, receiving Department for the Environment funding. Housing came top of the list when Hunton members discussed the issues and heard of a government target to build 8000 new houses, possibly more, in the Maidstone area.

'While certain villages may be safe from housing developments, new estates in nearby areas - such as the high density one at Tovil - may bring more traffic through the locality and have other knock-on effects,' said borough councillor Brian Mortimer, adding that Hill Reed has plans for "good quality units" in Coxheath.

Gary Thomas felt that major housing developments did not always bring jobs to an area. When they are planned, to ensure quality is maintained, the local infrastructure had to be upgraded for schools, hospitals, community halls and policing.

It was stressed that Maidstone has a history as a centre for industrial premises and there was a higher percentage of small, terraced housing than in many similar sized Kent towns, with a certain lack of quality housing areas. Council clerk David Swan said that in neighbouring West Farleigh those planning a new Community Hall had been informed their requests for grants would be helped if they had a Parish Plan.

Hunton School Children take on the Challenges

It was back to school with a bump for Hunton's Year 6 pupils taking the 11+ exam. Now it's over, watch this space. The busy January term has also seen talented writers from Year 6 working with the poet Brian Moses at Wateringbury School. Head teacher Sue Wood said: "The children gained a great deal from the experience and two of the pupils are going to be published on Brian Moses' website."

Parking remains a problem at the school. The local police constable discussed the situation with parents outside the school recently and it is hoped that cooperation between all parties will make it a safer place for everyone. The school is still looking for a crossing patrol person and the position has now been more widely advertised.

A new stage has been purchased for the school hall with funds raised at last year's 'wax-a-thon'. Future performances will run all the more smoothly thanks to John Holt's courageous efforts.

Finally, a group of Year Five and Six children are heading for the hills in February. The children will be staying at a residential outward bound centre where kayaking, high ropes and climbing await them. Mrs Wood said: "My vision is for all our children to leave us confident, academically able and articulate, with the ability to cope and thrive in new situations. They will be entering a world where change is rapid and these skills will be ever more important."

At St Mary's Church in February

Notices	Services
<p>Brass cleaning: David & Linda Twaite</p> <p>Flowers: 5th and 12th Mrs Twaite 19th and 26th Mrs Leonard</p> <p>Church Family Service Coffee Rota (11am) 5th February The Simmons Family 5th March The St John Family</p> <p>Church Cleaning Rota:</p> <p>Hunton Sunday Club The Sunday Club for all primary aged children, continues to meet on the 3rd Sunday afternoon of each month from 5.15 pm until 6.45 pm. On February 19th we will be meeting at Freelands, West Street. For details contact David Jones 01622 741474</p>	<p>Sunday 5th - Fourth Sunday before Lent 11am Church Family Service Mrs E.Doyle Reading: Mark 1: 29-34</p> <p>Sunday 12th - Third Sunday Before Lent 9.15am Holy Communion (1662) Revd D.Jones Readings: 2 Kings 5: 1-14; Mark 1: 40-45</p> <p>Sunday 19th - Second Sunday Before Lent 11 am Morning Prayer Miss C.Bostock Readings: Proverbs 8: 1, 22-31 John 1: 1-14</p> <p>Sunday 26th - Sunday Next Before Lent 9.15am Holy Communion (CW) Revd D.Jones Readings: 2 Kings 2, 1-12 Mark 9: 2-9</p> <p>Wednesday March 1st - Ash Wednesday 7.30pm Holy Communion at Linton for the Benefice Mrs E.Doyle Reading: Mark1: 29-34</p>

SOME IMPORTANT DATES:

JANUARY 29 th	United Benefice service at East Farleigh	10.30am
MARCH 1 st	Ash Wednesday (beginning of Lent) service at Linton	7.30pm
APRIL 13 th	Maundy Thursday - service at East Farleigh	7.30pm
APRIL 14 th	Good Friday - services: Hunton 9.30am & West Farleigh	2pm
MAY 7 th	Confirmation service - Linton	6pm
MAY 25 th	Ascension Day Coxheath	time: tba
JULY 30 th	UB service at West Farleigh	10.30am
OCTOBER 29 th	UB service at Coxheath	10.30am.
DECEMBER 31 st	UB service at Linton	10.30am.
EASTER DAY April 16 th :	services tba - but may well follow normal Sunday pattern	
LENT STUDIES IN HUNTON	(Mondays) DJ	
	E&W FARLEIGH (Tuesdays) PW	
	COXHEATH/LINTON (Tuesdays) RB	

CONFIRMATION CLASSES FOR ADULTS(PW) & YOUTH(RB) commence on Sunday February 26th.

Lent 2006

Ash Wednesday 2006 is on March 1st and there will be a service of Holy Communion for all churches in the Coxheath benefice in St Nicholas' Linton at 7.30 pm.

The 2006 lent Course will be held on Monday evenings in various homes in the village, commencing on Monday March 6th from 7.45 pm to 9.15 pm. The topic this year is 'Where is God?' The five sessions asks 'Where is God... when we face unhappiness; when we face suffering; when we make decisions; when we contemplate death and finally when we try to make sense of life? Full details in the March edition of the Hunton Herald, for further information contact David Jones 01622 741474

February	5th	12th	19th	26th	Wednesday 1st March Ash Wednesday
Coxheath	11.00 HC	9.15 MP	11.00 HC	11.00 CFS	
E. Farleigh	9.15HC	8.00 HC 10.30 MP	11.00 Parish Worship	8.00 HC 10.30 MP	
Linton	9.15HC	8.00 HC 11.00 CFS	9.15 HC	9.15 HC	7.30pm Benefice Service of Holy Communion
W. Farleigh	8.00 HC	11.00 CFS	9.15 HC	11.00 MP	

10am every Thursday—Holy Communion (1662) at Coxheath

HC: Holy Communion MP: Morning Prayer CFS: Church Family Service EA: Evening Alternative

For Weddings, Thanksgivings, and Baptisms, please contact Revd David Jones (741474)