



Editors: Sue & David Heaton, 3 New Cottages, Barn Hill, Hunton, ME15 0QT 01622 820678 herald@hunton.org.uk

Parish Council News

Fear of a Fatality

A Hunton resident, alarmed at speeding traffic in West Street and fearing that one day there will be a fatality, is calling a meeting on February 9th with the aim of forming a Residents' Association to call for action.

Mrs Jacqui Frances told the January Parish Council meeting that, as well as speed, the volume and type of traffic using the road was causing major concern.

"Several cats have been killed, houses shake from passing heavy lorries and cars have crashed through roadside fences, as vehicles use the road as a 'cut through' route on their way to and from work."

Mrs Frances is calling for a uniform speed limit of 30mph through Hunton; for more signs to indicate bends; speeding vehicles to be monitored; and also asked if it would be possible to erect restriction posts on the approaches to the village to force vehicles to slow down.

She was told that the posts would be a matter for the Highways Authority and that East Farleigh Council has said that it has Speed Watch equipment for use in checking traffic speed, but users would need to be trained.

Maidstone Borough Councillor, Colin Parr, said that when Coxheath pressed for speed calming measures, the authority needed statistics to back its case. Community Service Officer, Joanne Watts, said that the police are planning to carry out checks of the weight and speed of vehicles in Hunton and East Farleigh.

The Parish Council is still pressing for the footpath on West Street between Bensted Close and the Village Hall. Council Chairman, Roger Sawtell, said that he would like to see a number of options outlined for varying schemes complete with full estimates. A working party is due to hold an onsite meeting to discuss what action needs to be taken. The Highways Authority has already given six figure quotes for carrying out the road and drainage improvements, and in preparation for this work, the Parish Council is to set an increased precept for the coming year, so that there will be money in reserve to help towards the project.

A fund has already been started to which £932 has been donated from last year's village fete and a further £50 from a New Year event at the Village Hall.

Applause Event - The Martin Harley Band, Saturday 21 February, 8pm - Hunton Village Hall

The band are terrific live performers and in the intimate surroundings of the village hall should not be missed.

www.martinharley.com. Tickets £8 or £4 for under 21's are available from Alan 820683 or Jane 820127

Snow Drop Display

Anke and David Way are opening their garden for charity supported by The National Gardens Scheme. There will be over 100 kinds of snowdrops on display at 'Southover', in Grove Lane, Hunton on:

Saturday 14th February 2009, 11.00 am to 4.00 pm, Entry £3.50, children free

Refreshments, snowdrops for sale. Proceeds for charity and NGS (National Garden Scheme)

Your Local Contacts:

Parish Council Chairman: Roger Sawtell	820731	Village Club: Doug Redfarn	820495
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Clerk to Parish Council: Vikki Stancombe	842782
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Village Hall Booking: Jane Crane	820127
Pre-School Supervisor: Nicola Julier	07972067110	Maidstone Police:	608186
Pond and Tree Warden: Anne Bishop	820683	Neighbourhood Watch:	608173
Rector: Revd Peter Walker	747570**	'Potholes' concern (KCC): Kim Hills	0845 824 7800
Associate Rector: Revd David Jones	741474*	Churchwarden: Alison Ellman-Brown	820288
		Organist: Philip Moore	749356
		PCSO Hannah Percival	07772226032

*not available on Fridays **not available on Mondays

Dates for Diaries:

Saturday 7th February, 7.30pm, Maidstone Symphony Orchestra, Mote Hall Maidstone

Monday 9th February, 8pm, to form a Residents Association, Hunton Village Hall

Wednesday 11th February, 7.30pm Drink, Drugs and Jesus, 40 years of the KENWARD TRUST, Salvation Army, Union Street, Maidstone

Thursday 12th February & Tuesday 10th March, 10.30 to 3pm, Coffee Morning in aid of OPTIONS, 23 Bensted Close Hunton

Saturday 14th February, Snowdrops, Southover, Grove Lane, 11am-4pm.

Saturday 21st February, 8pm, Applause Event, Village Hall

Week Beginning 23rd February, GO SLOW WEEK, Hunton Village

Thursday 12th March, 8pm, Parish Council meeting, Village Hall

Saturday 27th June, Hunton Village Fete

Parish Councillors contact details

Parish Council Chairman	
- Roger Sawtell	820731
Clerk to the Parish Council	
- Vikki Stancombe	842782
Cllr Les Leonard	820858
Cllr Moira Walter	745765
Cllr Gary Thomas	820691
Cllr David Heaton	820678
Cllr Keith Eatwell	745569
Cllr Ron Porter	820220

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

Dear Friends,

'Are you going to be ashed?' I recall the moment well when in my first year with the brothers at St. Michael's, Ash Wednesday loomed and the beginning of Lent was heralded by this ancient custom, a tradition unknown to me having come from a very middle of the road Anglican upbringing. I did recall the phrase 'sackcloth and ashes' which I later discovered comes from Daniel chapter 9: 'And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth and ashes'. An ancient Hebrew custom thus it was to wear sackcloth dusted with or accompanied by ashes as a sign of humbleness and contrition.

No sackcloth at St. Michael's House but plenty of ash.

Many years have passed since those days of discovery and in some churches I too have 'ashed' people - so that those who know not this practice sometimes give a peculiar sideways look to folk emerging from church with that distinctive dirty mark on their foreheads, and wonder if they forgot to look in the bathroom mirror that day.

So I guess this year it's a trip to Mary's house and her fireplace which has accumulated much ash from her wood burning over Winter, and collect a container full for the Ash Wednesday service. Though in truth the ash is supposed to come from the burnt Palm Crosses of the previous year. It requires a lot of crosses to even make a decent pile of ash - I tried it once and failed. Perhaps this year I will put my little collection of Palm Crosses in Mary's fire.

So Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and the road towards Holy Week, Good Friday and Easter. I often wonder if people do stick to 'giving things up for Lent'. A brother at St. Michael's would say to us students: 'take on something - don't give something up'. In retrospect it was a sensible suggestion, though I cannot recall now taking on something else, but I do remember how, many years ago, I gave up sugar in my tea and coffee and have never returned to it since.

Lent is an old Anglo-Saxon word: 'Lencten' meaning 'Spring'. It doesn't feel much like Spring at present, though the snowdrops are starting to edge their way up through the soil in the Rectory garden. It'll be awhile yet. The fog lingers and clings around the village and only a few days ago the Christmas Carol verse seemed so true: 'Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone'. 'Put some more water out for the birds' I'm reminded. It still freezes solid every time. Though the bird seeds and nuts are always welcome by the blackbirds and robins.

So we will make our way to church on Ash Wednesday and armed with Mary's fireplace offerings will perform the ancient custom once more as we are reminded of our own need for contrition knowing that our Heavenly Father is all too willing and ready to give us His forgiveness and blessing.

With prayers as Lent approaches (Ash Wednesday February 25th)

Peter

(Written in the style of 'A word from Wormingford' a weekly column in Church Times)

Ann Widdecombe to open the Fete

This summer's fete is to be staged on June 27th and Maidstone MP, Ann Widdecombe, has been asked if she would open the event.

Objections to Warehouse Development

Hunton Parish Council is writing to object to plans for developing the Kent International Gateway complex of warehousing at Bearsted, as members felt that the likely increase of heavy lorries using the local roads would be unacceptable. The complex is also situated in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Hunton Village Club

There was a disappointing turn out of members for the AGM so we will try to hold it earlier in December this year and hope for a larger turn out. Ted Towner was welcomed back to the committee and a couple of rule amendments were approved. The inevitable discussion regarding beer and pricing took place and it was agreed that the rotation of different beers was working with members enjoying the change. Christmas Eve was a great success with the Grand Christmas Draw, thanks to the hard work of Donna and Nick who also put in much hard work on New Year's Eve which unfortunately was not so well supported. The committee is considering investing in some live entertainment for this New Year's Eve but much will depend on cost.

Projects for this year are likely to include refurbishing the upholstery and reclaiming the small area at the back of the Club from the nettles and brambles and clearing it of the rubbish that has collected over the years. A new side gate is also to be fitted. The Club now has its own website which is working but remains work in progress, so everyone can keep up to date with the news by visiting www.huntonvillageclub.co.uk. We hope to upload photos and provide details of events on a regular basis.

The 2009 membership cards are now available at the Club and application forms for new members are also in good supply. We really do need new members and support from the village so do come along and see for yourself what a nice place it is with prices well below most pub prices; membership remains at £10 per year with concessions for those over a certain age.

Phil Nichols

Hunton Book Group December Book Review - 'The Resurrectionist' by James Bradley

'The Resurrectionist' is the story of Gabriel Swift, a medical apprentice in Georgian London. The law only permits dissection of the bodies of executed murderers, so the resurrectionists excavate new graves to supply bodies for medical research. When Gabriel loses his apprenticeship, he is drawn into the increasingly dark world of the grave robbers.

James Bradley paints a very bleak and seedy picture of life in Georgian London, and whilst the subject matter is at times rather gruesome, the historical aspect of the story was intriguing. However, it was generally felt that this novel was tedious and disjointed, and some of the group found the story somewhat difficult to follow. Although the story provoked some discussion, it was felt that an opportunity had been missed to explore the psychological and spiritual aspects of the subject. The group gave this book an average score of 4.5

The book for January is 'A Thousand Splendid Suns' by Khaled Hosseini.

Lorraine Redfarn

Fed up with Speeding Traffic in West Street?

Join our Go Slow Week 23rd February 2009

Most of us who live in West Street are very fed up with the volume and speed of traffic in the road. In the last 3 months, two of our cats have been run over; sadly Ron Porter's was killed on Christmas Eve.

I am attending the Parish Council Meeting on the 15th January to raise these traffic issues. I am also holding a meeting in Hunton Village Hall on 9th February in order to form a Residents Association and to discuss the traffic problems and what can be done. Hopefully, by the time you read this, a date for a second Residents Association Meeting will have been set and the association will have been formed, named and registered

It would be great if as many people as possible would commit to driving slowly - no more than 30 mph for the whole length of the road - during that week - even if you don't actually live on the road!

I have been in touch with the Kent Messenger and I think they will do an article on the Go Slow Week (an article on speeding traffic should have already been published). I am also going to try to get the week advertised by Kent Radio, maybe even the local SE News. I think it would be good if we could get some banners made - I will try to contact the Yalding campaigners about this, but if anyone can help, please could they contact me?

If you are interested in joining/supporting us in any way, however small or large; or have any comments to make, then, please contact: Jacqui Frances, The Barn, West Street. Telephone: 820781 . Email: jayseafran@yahoo.co.uk

Out and Out - Wollemi comes to Hunton

Wollemi, a National Park just a couple of hours drive from Sydney in Australia, was the location for an amazing horticultural find. In 1994 after several difficult abseils into canyons as deep as the Empire State Building is high, David Nobel found himself face to face with a tree which first grew on this earth up to 200 million years ago - it was the equivalent of finding a small dinosaur still alive on Earth.

Less than 100 trees survive in the wild but an initiative to propagate and distribute young plants hopes to ensure the survival of this Wollemi Pine. One such plant arrived in Hunton on 25th December last year. So I have an amazing throwback which at the moment takes pride of place on my table. But what to do? The instructions say it will be fine outside, but will I be unleashing some thing which will grow to dinosaur proportions (have you seen Jurassic Park?) or like the Dinosaurs will the first cold spell drive this plant to extinction? I'll be pleased to hear from anyone who has any ideas....

Christine McSweeney

School News 'Hunton Church of England Primary School is an Outstanding Church School'

(Rochester Diocese statutory inspection of Anglican Schools December 2008)

Following on from the successful Ofsted Inspection, Hunton School was then inspected by Rochester Diocese. This inspection lasted one day and inspected the RE curriculum, assemblies and the Christian ethos of the school. Hunton School was very pleased to be recognised as an outstanding church school which 'has created an ethos based on Christian principles of truth, kindness and peace. Pupils value the importance of being listened to by staff and say that their opinions matter. The school environment provides excellent opportunities for children and creative displays of children's work are of high quality and support learning in religious education. Pupils make excellent progress in spiritual and moral awareness.' There are no key issues for development.

I am sure everyone would agree these are all skills which are imperative to being citizens of the 21st Century.

Following on from a very successful 2008 the new year began at Hunton School with the arrival of builders to begin work on the new classroom and entrance area. Great excitement has followed with the arrival of a piling machine and digger. Unfortunately a builders' dumper truck was stolen in the first week! The thieves had taken it through the fence and across the sheep field. The fence was quickly repaired by the builders and our school is now once again secure.

Never ones to miss a learning opportunity the staff quickly used the situation to trigger children's imagination and writing skills. Reception class wrapped up warm and went on a walk to investigate the crime and enjoy the awe and wonder of the winter wonderland. They took photographs of the crime scene before coming into school to write a factual account of the event. When Maidstone Police arrived the policeman took time to visit Reception, read their account of the event and took away a range of photographs to add to his file! He thanked the children for being his investigators. Upper School spent time writing a creative story about the adventures of the runaway truck.

At St Mary's Church in February

Notices	Services
<p>Coffee Rota: 1st February McSweeney Family Brass Cleaning: Sandra Bullivant Flowers 1st February Mrs Grainger 8th February Mrs Grainger 15th February Mrs Ellman-Brown 22nd February Mrs Ellman-Brown</p> <p>Hunton Sunday Club Our February meeting will be on Sunday 15 February at South Lodge, Lughorse Lane, home of Ted and Celia Missons starting at our usual time of 5.15pm until 6.45pm. A reminder, the Club is open to all children of primary school age either living in Hunton or attending Hunton School. We aim to have fun with a craft activity, or in the summer, games and swimming, followed by tea. All are very welcome but contact David on 741474 if you are new or want further details.</p>	<p>Sunday 1st February —Epiphany 4 11am Family Service Revd David Jones Readings: Preacher's choice</p> <p>Sunday 8th February- 3rd before Lent 9.30am Holy Communion Revd Peter Walker Readings: 1 Corinthians 9 v 16 - 33, Mark 1 v 29 -39</p> <p>Sunday 15th February—2nd before Lent 11am Morning Prayer Revd Michael Shaw Readings: Proverbs 8 v 1, 22 - 31, John 1 v 1 - 14</p> <p>Sunday 22nd February—Sunday next before Lent 9.30am Holy Communion Revd David Jones Readings: 2 Corinthians 4 v 3 - 6, Mark 9 v 2 - 9</p>

'Known Unto God'

All Day Fund Raising, Coffee Morning in aid of OPTIONS

10.30am to 3pm at 23 Bensted Close Hunton ME15 0SD, on Thursday 12th February and Tuesday 10th March 2009
 ☞ All Welcome ☛

I am raising funds for **OPTIONS, Centre for crisis pregnancy and post-abortion support.**

OPTIONS offers free, friendly, confidential advice and information to anyone who finds themselves in difficult circumstances related to unexpected pregnancy. **OPTIONS** need your help to raise £5,000. This will assist this valuable service in obtaining full charitable status and help ensure its continued availability in the Maidstone area.

About Me: Having recently completed a Foundation Course in Art & Design at the University for the Creative Arts, I will again be exhibiting the work I produced for my Final Major Project. This work was previously selected for exhibition in the Maidstone Library Gallery in May 2008. The work has a strong connection with pregnancy crisis, as it deals with taboo subjects relating to child mortality.

This small exhibition titled '**Known Unto God**', will contain a short film, textile art in the form of muslin gowns, charcoal drawings, acrylic painting on canvas and my research journal. All of which will all available for view and discussion concerning the motivation behind the works.

So why not come along and take advantage of these two dates to view my work, enjoy your favourite beverage (tea or coffee), have something for the sweet tooth and raise funds for this very much needed voluntary service for the Maidstone area. For more information please contact me:

Kay Mason on: 07921122802 or 01622820488 - email: Kaysey61@yahoo.com

Churches Together in Maidstone

Forum Meeting, **Wednesday 11 February 2009, 7.30pm for 7.45pm start**

Drink, Drugs and Jesus, 40 years of the KENWARD TRUST,

Talk by Tony Williams and others on the work and vision of the Trust

Salvation Army, Union Street Maidstone

5 Parishes Men's Club

Men's breakfast at The Ridge Golf Club, East Sutton, Saturday 21 February 8 am to 10 am with guest speaker.

Please note that date and invite your friends/neighbours. If you need any more information or require help with transport then please let us know.

Mike Marsh and Jonathan Barnes Tel 01622 745702 or 07734 336339 - www.theridgegolfclub.co.uk

February	1st	8th	15th	22nd	25th Ash Wednesday
Coxheath	11.00 HC	9.30 MP	11.00 HC	11.00 FS	
E. Farleigh	9.30 HC 3pm Baptism	8.00 HC 11.00 FS	9.30 HC	8.00 HC and 9.30 Matins	
Linton	9.30 HC	9.30 HC	8.00 HC and 11.00 FS & Baptism	9.30am HC	
W. Farleigh	8.00am HC	11.00 Matins	9.30 HC	11.00 Matins	7.30pm HC

HC: Holy Communion, MP: Morning Prayer, (bcp) Book of Common Prayer, FS: Family Service,
 SW: Service of Word
 APCM Annual Parish Council Meeting

For Weddings, Thanksgivings, and Baptisms, please contact Revd Peter Walker