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Two Crashes Block Roads

A crashed car blocked Hunton Hill for several hours on the evening of Good Friday. The driver reportedly lost control and clipped the bank causing the vehicle to roll several times, narrowly missing a car travelling in the opposite direction. The driver and his two passengers escaped unhurt.

On Saturday 23rd April Lughorse Lane was blocked by a collision between a van and two cyclists on the bend near to Pennywood Cottages. Both cyclists were taken to hospital but it is not thought that their injuries were serious.

Annual Village Meeting – Monday 22nd May 7.30pm

The Annual Village Meeting will take place in the village hall on Monday 22nd May and all residents are invited to come along to this informal evening. This is your chance to raise any issues of concern you may have about the village and to cross question your borough and parish councillors and other officials. Local groups and clubs will also present short reports on their activities over the last year, so do come along and find out what's been happening in your community. Tea and coffee will be served from 7pm and a free light buffet supper will be provided in the interval.

Cup Final Victory

Congratulations to Hunton FC who emerged the victors in the Benevolent Cup Final played at the Gallagher Stadium on 7th April in front of a crowd of over 200, beating Lenham Wanderers 5-4 after extra time. The team will also be contesting the final of the Tunbridge Wells Cup (which they won last year) on Thursday 4th May at 7.30pm at the Culverden Stadium in Tunbridge Wells and supporters would be very welcome. Anyone interested in getting involved with the club should phone club chairman Dave Elliot on 07766 732259.



Speedwatch Volunteers Needed

The Hunton Speedwatch team is in need of additional volunteers to help with speed monitoring within the village. When our Speedwatch team is out regularly there is a noticeable decrease in the average speeds of vehicles through the village and we need more volunteers so that we can get out there more often. The aim of the scheme is to educate drivers to reduce their speed to within the speed limit thereby making our roads safer and improving the quality of life for local residents. Sessions are usually an hour long and carried out at various times of day by a team of four or five people. (We generally have time for a bit of a chat as well, so it's not an unpleasant way to spend an hour). There is no obligation to take part in any particular session with volunteers being free to pick and choose those that are convenient to them. A short online training session needs to be completed by all new volunteers, followed by a familiarisation session at the roadside, but neither of these is particularly onerous. If you can spare an hour here and there and would like to join the team, or require more information, please contact Helen on 01622 820810 or email helen@helenward.org.

Your Local Contacts:		Village Hall Booking:	www.huntonvillagehall.co.uk
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Maidstone Police	690690 or 101
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Neighbourhood Watch: huntonwatch@gmail.com	820403, 820429, 820731
Pre-School Supervisor:	07972067110	'Potholes' Hotline (KCC)	03000 418181
Pond and Tree Warden: Mike Summersgill	820429	Community Warden: Adam McKinley	07811 271021
Rector: Revd. Peter Callway	747570*	PCSO - Megan Day	101 (or via Huntonwatch)
Hon Associate Rector: Revd. David Jones	741474*	Helen Grant MP helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk	0207 219 7107
Associate Rector: Revd Eileen Doyle	204241**	Hunton Bell Ringers, Michael Webb	745716
Churchwarden: Alison Ellman-Brown	820288	*not available on Fridays; **not available on Mondays or Tuesdays	
Village Club: Philip Nichols	820804		
Contact details for other village clubs and organisations are available at www.hunton.org.uk/contacts			

Diary Dates		Parish Council Contacts	
Fri 5 th May	Pre-School Quiz Night Village Club 7 for 7.30pm	Parish Council Chairman – Gary Thomas	820691
Sat 6 th May	Wines for Summer Village Club 7 for 7.30pm	Clerk to the Parish Council – Sharon Goodwin	681238
Mon 8 th May	Annual Parish Council Meeting Village Hall 7.30pm	Cllr Jonny Goddard	820096
Sat 13 th May	Church & Churchyard Clean Up 9am-12pm	Cllr David Heaton	820678
Tues 16 th May	Tom Crean Talk Village Club 7pm	Cllr Roger Lee	820210
Fri 19 th May	Needles & Natter Village Club 8pm	Cllr Tony Stanbridge	820721
Mon 22 nd May	Annual Village Meeting Village Hall 7.30pm	Cllr Annette Trought	820448
Check out www.hunton.org.uk/diary for the latest events.		Cllr Helen Ward	820810
If you would like to add an event, email diary@hunton.org.uk			

Pastoral Letter

The wedding season is upon us once more. There are wedding fairs all over the country almost every weekend as couples look for inspiration, ideas, products and services. From cakes to caterers, drinks to dresses, hen and stag dos to honeymoons, stationery to shoes, everything you could ever need or want or desire can be found at wedding shows or fairs. You can even find out about getting married in the Church of England!

It seems that people are willing to spend vast amounts of money on a wedding. According to a survey carried out by hitched.co.uk the annual bill for weddings in the UK is a staggering £10 billion. From engagement through ceremony, celebration and honeymoon the average cost of a wedding in the UK is an astonishing £36,000. Yes, £36,000. That does include the clothes and gifts purchased by the guests but the cost to the bride and groom (or their parents if they are very fortunate) still amounts to over £12,000 for the wedding day and an additional £2,700 on a honeymoon.

The average couple spend £2,500 on food, £1,500 on venue hire, over £1,000 on clothes, nearly £400 on flowers and £300 on a cake. Getting married in church costs about £580 including an organist.

The church is really enthusiastic about marriage. Many couples who have lived together see it as the “gold standard” or the final step in securing their relationship. It is God’s blueprint for a lifelong loving relationship and creates an environment in which families can flourish physically and emotionally. About 77,000 (a third of) weddings take place in churches each year and nearly every couple who do so say that it is because it makes the marriage special, it is a spiritual thing. Only 4% marry in church because of the pretty buildings.

The Church of England has a great website (www.yourchurchwedding.org) which allows couples to plan their ceremony, choose hymns and readings etc. It’s a great resource and one couple said this about it: “Just wanted to say what a fantastic website you have. There has obviously been a lot of thought and hard work put in to make it so helpful. Particularly liked the planner and the fact that you listen to the hymns to help you decide. I was going to get married in a country hotel but I have now changed my mind so I will be getting married in a church next year. I will definitely be using the online planner. Many thanks.”

Many blessings, *Rev Peter Callway*

Pothole Blitz

Kent County Council has launched its 2017 pothole blitz, which will be continuing throughout the spring and summer. If you spot a pothole around the village please report it using the online fault reporting tool available on their website www.kent.gov.uk/highways. They’ve made the form simpler and quicker to use, especially from mobile phones and tablets.

Book Group Review – I am Pilgrim by Terry Hayes

I am Pilgrim, the debut novel by Terry Hayes, follows former US intelligence agent, codename Pilgrim, as he is brought in to help investigate the murder of a woman in a New York hotel room. What begins as an unusual and challenging investigation becomes a terrifying race-against-time to save America from oblivion as Pilgrim journeys from a public beheading in Mecca to a deserted ruins on the Turkish coast via a Nazi death camp in Alsace and the barren wilderness of the Hindu Kush in search of the faceless man who would commit an appalling act of mass murder in the name of his God.

Many members were put off by the size of the book. It was a gruesome thriller, very of the moment as it followed a “lone wolf” terrorist, and a bit far fetched in places. The group gave it three out of five stars.

Brenda Day 1916-2017

We are very sad to report that former Hunton resident, Brenda Day, whom many of you will remember celebrated her 100th birthday last November, passed away on Sunday 2nd April following a short illness.

Born Brenda Body into a farming family from Biddenden, she attended Goudhurst Ladies College and became a nanny. During the Second World War she served with the WAAF and was a plotter in the operations room at RAF Fighter Command in Stanmore, where she plotted the course of the plane taken by Rudolf Hess when he arrived in Scotland on a secret mission to negotiate peace with Britain.

In 1942 she married Roland Day, who was from a big farming family in West Farleigh, and in 1946 the couple moved to Elphicks Farm in Hunton, where they farmed for 50 years and brought up their three children, Robert, Simon and Diana. They were both keen tennis players and Brenda also played bowls for Kent. They retired to West Farleigh in 1996, where Brenda continued to live independently following Roland’s death in 2011.

A service of thanksgiving and cremation was held at Vinters Park Crematorium on Monday 24th April.

Potential Cuts to Local Rail Services

The government is currently consulting on the future of the South Eastern Rail Franchise. The contract with the current operator expires in December 2018 so they are looking at ways to improve the network ahead of awarding a new franchise. One suggestion being considered is providing faster services between Ashford and Tonbridge by cutting services to the “less used” intermediate stations which would include Paddock Wood, Marden and Staplehurst. The consultation document and details of how to respond can be found at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-south-eastern-rail-services.

Changes to Bus Services

There have been some changes to the bus services that run through the village. In most cases the No 25 bus has replaced the No 26 (with the exception of the early morning and afternoon school day services which are still the No 26). The first bus of the morning now starts from the war memorial in Yalding, and as it no longer has to cross Yalding Bridge, should hopefully run to time. A number of services have been re-routed to run via Gallants Lane. The bus that runs along East Street on school day mornings and afternoons is now the No 22. Full details of these changes and an up to date timetable can be found at www.nu-venture.co.uk or by phoning Nu-Venture on 01622 882288.

Help Improve the River Beult SSSI

Natural England and the Environment Agency would like to invite you to help them to improve the River Beult Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), between Hadmans Bridge near Smarden and its confluence with the River Medway at Yalding. This piece of work is part of an action plan being developed by the Medway Flood Partnership to better manage water across the catchment.

They want to understand how you use the river and how it could better meet people's needs in the catchment – this could be through managing water levels differently, creating better habitat for fish or... something else!

This builds on work local people and organisations have already started through the Beult Catchment Improvement Group. Your involvement will be essential to improve the river as a natural resource for people and wildlife.

They want to know:

- What geographical area of the River Beult SSSI are you interested in?
- What are your ideas for improving land and water management on the River Beult?
- How would you like to be kept informed? (e.g. letter, email)

They will use this information to gather a wide variety of options, which will be considered for feasibility. They will then hold workshops in the summer to discuss the shortlisted options in more detail.

If you would like to help with the consultation, please contact Sam Thomas, Biodiversity Technical Officer on 03708 506506 or email sam.thomas@environment-agency.gov.uk.

The Gardens Open Day With Yalding Beekeepers - Sunday 14th May 10.30am to 4pm

A fantastic opportunity to enjoy these much loved private gardens (formerly Yalding Organic Gardens) in spring. Throughout the day there will be live music playing, so why not have a lazy Sunday and relax in the tranquility of the gardens with a mid-late morning drink and a piece of homemade cake in the beekeepers' refreshment tent, or stay on for a hog roast lunch with a cold beverage from The Gardens' staffed bar. Visit the beekeepers' apiary in the paddock, see live bees behind glass in an observation hive, make your own solitary bee house, or find out more about beekeeping. Or just browse some beekeeping equipment, craft, plant and country stalls. The Beekeepers' Auction is back this year and info for buyers or sellers can be obtained by emailing treasurer@yaldingbeekeepers.co.uk. Entry £5 per person, children under 16 are free. Free parking. Sorry no dogs (except guide dogs). Disabled access friendly. The Gardens, Benover Road, Yalding ME18 6EX.

Weir Safety Warning

Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) has warned of the dangers of swimming in the weir at Yalding. The area close to Teapot Island and The Lees attracts many visitors in the summer months and families are often found paddling in the shallow river water between the sluice gates and the bridge, ignoring the "danger", "keep out" and "no swimming" signs. In recent years, there have been several serious 'near misses', where people have been close to drowning and have needed to be rescued.

Swimming in any river is extremely dangerous as there may be strong currents and the water can very cold, even on a warm day, but the area of the weir pool is especially hazardous due to the automatic sluice gates, which control water levels along the river. These gates can open at any time, without warning to release water from upstream, turning a shallow pool into a dangerous torrent. Anyone in the water can find themselves quickly out of their depth and can soon get into difficulty. There is a strong risk of them getting washed under the bridge into the main part of the River Medway, into very deep water, with even stronger currents and hidden dangers. This area has steep banks, making it difficult for anyone to get out.

To help prevent people accessing the water the EA has recently installed a new security gate by the weir pool and fitted additional rows of handrail on existing fencing to fill in where there are gaps. Yalding Parish Council is also in the process of erecting a fence, gates and signage at the top of the slipway on the Lees car park to make people more aware of the danger of entering the weir pool and to hopefully prevent small children running off on their own.

KFRS community safety delivery manager Rob Groombridge said: "Please make sure you and your family stay safe from this danger by keeping out of the water and the weir pool. Make sure your visitors know about the dangers too!"

Village Fete – Help Needed!

A reminder that the village fete takes place on Saturday 17th June from 2-5pm. Volunteers are needed to help with setting up and taking down before and after the event, manning stalls, serving refreshments and parking. Please let Annette know on 01622 820448 if you are able to help.

Beer and Cider Festival

Following the popularity of last year's beer and cider festival, Liz Ridgeway has agreed to organise another one this year. It will be held at the village club in September, although the date is yet to be confirmed.

Talk on Tom Crean, Antarctic Explorer – Tuesday 16th May

Non-members, both male and female, are invited to join the WI at Hunton Village Club for the latest talk in their program of open evenings. Michael Smith, a freelance journalist who worked for the Guardian, Observer and Evening Standard for more than twenty years, will give a talk on the Antarctic explorer, Tom Crean. Tom ran away to sea aged 15 and played a memorable role in Antarctic exploration. He spent more time in the unexplored Antarctic than Scott or Shackleton, and outlived both. He was amongst the last to see Scott alive, being in the search party that found the frozen body. An unforgettable story of triumph over unparalleled hardship and deprivation, supported by archive photos, it promises to be a fascinating evening.

The club and the bar will be open from 7pm and non-members are welcome to come along for a small donation of £5 each to include light refreshments. Please let Ann Sawtell (01622 820731) or Fay Joyce (01622 820644) know if you are coming so that they can ensure there is enough seating and, more importantly, tea, coffee and cakes.

At St Mary's Church in May

Flowers				Services	
7th	Moira Ensoll	14th	Moira Ensoll	Sunday 7th May – Easter 4 11.00am Family Service – Rev Peter Callway	
21st	Fay Joyce	28th	Fay Joyce		
Hunton Village Club Opening Hours Wed-Fri 8-11pm Sun 12-2.30pm & 8-10.30pm				Sunday 14th May – Easter 5 9.30am Holy Communion 1662 – Rev Eileen Doyle	
				Sunday 21st May – Easter 6 11.00am Morning Prayer – Rev David Jones	
				Sunday 28th May – Easter 7 11.00am Holy Communion – Rev Peter Callway	

May Songs and Celebrations

The Chancel Singers and Friends will perform at Saints Peter and Paul Church, Yalding on 20th May at 7.30pm in aid of SchoolGambia. The programme will include folk songs, madrigals, canticles, Handel Coronation Anthems and Schubert Mass in G. Wine and soft drinks will be served in the interval. Tickets £10 from 01622 814267.

Join Hunton Gardening Club Visits

Allington Castle - Tuesday 6th June 1.45pm

There are still a few spaces left on a tour of Allington Castle and grounds costing £17 each including tea and cake.

Laurence J Betts Farm - Tuesday 20th June 5pm

Several fields around Hunton are used by the team from Laurence J Betts Farm to grow salad crops. The gardening club has been invited on a tour of the farm operations including cold store, pack house, trials area and workshop at Church Farm, Offham.

If you would like to join the gardening club on either of these visits or would like more information, please email Lesley on Lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com or phone 01622 820210.

Church and Churchyard Working Party – Saturday 13th May 9am–12pm

In order to try to maintain St Mary's Church and churchyard, two working parties have been held so far this year. However grass and weeds are growing fast at the moment, and there are always jobs needing to be done inside the church, so please try to spare the odd hour to help on Saturday 13th May. After that we hope the growing rate will slow and the next session will be on Saturday 1st July just before there are a series of weddings in the church. As usual, if you think you may be able to join us, please let Lesley know so she can take enough supplies for the coffee break. lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com 01622 820210

Riverside Pop-Up Gallery May Exhibition

Hunton photographer, Desmond Sturdee, will be exhibiting at Riverside Pop-Up Gallery in Yalding from 29th April until 22nd May, alongside the crackle glaze pottery of husband and wife team, Dick and Julie Duirak, glass artist Alisa Jaffa and the mixed-media of fashion artist, Jean Stern. A truly eclectic mix! The gallery, situated just behind Yalding Post Office, is open on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 2-5pm. Entrance Free.

East Farleigh Farmers' Market

We had a beautiful morning for our first spring market of 2017. Teston Bakery brought more bread this time and yet still sold out by 11am! There was lots of interest in the Yarns of Anarchy wool stall and Hedgehog Garden Ornaments, whilst Marianne's Kitchen (previously Sunnyside Bakes) did a brisk trade in almond croissants, lasagne and lemon tart. The English breakfast/brunch served by the kitchen proved extremely popular and is likely to become a regular feature. Two last-minute bookings were made by Bergamia Tea offering a wide range of delicious leaf teas and herbal infusions and Alan Saunders art metalwork, forged locally. We also welcomed representatives of Age Concern publicising their Befriending Service in West Kent which we supported with a £100 donation from the March market.

The May Farmers' Market will be held on Sunday 7th May from 10am to 1pm. Whitepeake Jewellery will be absent this month, but we welcome back Compass Rose soap. Sadly our fruit and vegetable supplier can no longer attend but we hope to find a replacement very soon. All our other regular stallholders will be there including newcomers Gemma Keith artwork and Alan Saunders Metalwork.

Pre-School Quiz Night

Hunton & Linton Pre-school is holding a quiz night on Friday 5th May at the village club. Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. Entry £5 per head. Come with a team of six or join with others on the night. There will be a licensed bar to provide liquid refreshment but bring your own nibbles. For advance booking and payment, please email huntonpreschool@hotmail.com

May	7 th	14 th	21 st	28 th
Coxheath	11.00 HC	11.00 MP	11.00 HC	11.00 FS
E. Farleigh	09.30 MP	08.00 HC; 11.00 FS	09.30 HC	08.00 HC
Linton	09.30 HC	09.30 FS	08.00 HC	09.30 HC
W. Farleigh	08.00 HC 1662	11.00 MP Mod	09.30 MP Trad	09.30 HC Mod
HC Holy Communion, MP Morning Prayer, FS Family Service				

All items for the next edition of the Herald to the Editor by 15th May, please