



Appalachian Adventure

Approaching the end of her BSc, Hunton resident Megan Dolman had no idea of what she wanted to do in life. "I might just go and hike the Appalachian Trail or something", she complained to a friend...a throwaway comment but the seed had been sown. On 5th March Megan set out on the adventure of a lifetime to thru-hike the Appalachian Trail – 2,190 miles, through 14 states from Georgia to Maine, taking six months...and doing it alone!

Here at the Herald we will be following Megan's progress and publishing extracts from her blog, which can be found at <https://megdolmanat2018.wordpress.com>.

First Day on the AT

I was dropped in the centre of this rather empty parking lot in the middle of a forest and was wished on my way. To actually start my journey I needed to hike a mile up Springer Mt., to touch the first official white blaze (small white rectangles that mark out the entire AT route), to then hike that same mile down and officially be 1 mile nearer to Maine. In my head I thought, "so I am hiking 2,190 miles but I have to hike an extra mile up a mountain to then 'officially' start from the top... great", but I put one foot in front of the other and haven't looked back since!

Although I hiked alone during my first day I came into contact with lots of people, but it wasn't until I reached my first campsite (Hawk Mountain Shelter, 7.7 miles later – well technically 8.7 but who's counting...) that I made my first friend on the AT. Thankfully though, as I was arriving to the campsite, he was just leaving (for a casual walk to find some more people, I guess 7.7 miles just isn't enough for some...) which gave me about an hour-ish alone to look like the complete and utter novice that I am! This involved pitching my tent facing the wrong way, dropping a rock on my foot after fixing the tent stakes, and unpacking *everything* from my bag in an attempt to find some antibac which I later found in my coat pocket...

Bears

Since I started my thru-hike it has become apparent that most hikers (I have met American ones so far) tend to not fear bears. I have also gathered that **no one carries bear spray**. Yes my backpack is 'light' (though it doesn't feel like it) but my bear spray is definitely among the heavier items of my pack. Please be reassured though that I shall still carry it to the end just in case, no matter how much grief I get about the 'British girl and her bear spray'. That particular night I did not hear any bears but I was more than a little unnerved by the sound of coyotes howling nearby as I lay in my tent in the middle of the forest.

12 Days In...

We entered into our second state on Tuesday afternoon. Our chosen campsite for that night was just across the border, and on arriving into the flat area designed for camping, we came across these signs saying "Closed for Ecological Restoration - No Camping, Please Camp on the Ridge". As I am no rule-breaker the *only* option was to pitch our tents on the top of the mountain ridge. After sitting in our tents for about 30 minutes on top of this cold and windy

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Your Local Contacts:		Village Hall Booking:	
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Maidstone Police	www.huntonvillagehall.co.uk
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Neighbourhood Watch: huntonwatch@gmail.com	690690 or 101
Pre-School Supervisor:	07972067110	'Potholes' Hotline (KCC)	820403,820429, 820731
Pond and Tree Warden: Mike Summersgill	820429	Community Warden: Adam McKinley	03000 418181
Rector: Revd. Peter Callway	747570*	PCSO - Jasmine Pay	07811 271021
Hon Associate Rector: Revd. David Jones	741474*	Helen Grant MP helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk	101
Associate Rector: Revd Eileen Doyle	204241**	Hunton Bell Ringers, Michael Webb	0207 219 7107
Churchwarden: Alison Ellman-Brown	820288	*not available on Fridays; **not available on Mondays or Tuesdays	
Village Club: Gil Robertson	820059		

Parish Council Contacts			
Parish Council Chairman – Gary Thomas 820691		Clerk to the Parish Council – Sharon Goodwin 681238	
Cllr Jonny Goddard 820096	Cllr David Heaton 820678	Cllr Roger Lee 820210	
Cllr Tony Stanbridge 820721	Cllr Annette Trought 820448	Cllr Helen Ward 820810	

Diary Dates			
Sat 31 st March	Churchyard Working Party 9am-12pm	Tues 3 rd April	WI Meeting Village Club 7.15pm
Thurs 12 th April	Robin Hood Panto Village Hall 7.30pm	Fri 13 th April	Robin Hood Panto Village Hall 7.30pm
Sat 14 th April	Robin Hood Panto Village Hall 2pm & 7.30pm	Sat 21 st April	Bowls Club Coffee Morning Clubhouse 10am
Sun 22 nd April	Walk 11am and Lunch 12.30pm Village Club	Sat 28 th April	Churchyard Working Party 9am-12pm

Check out www.hunton.org.uk/diary for the latest events. If you would like to add an event, email diary@hunton.org.uk

Pastoral Letter

Recently Coxheath featured on the TV programme "Village of the Year", and the programme focussed largely around the World Custard Pie Championships as an example of the eccentric traditions that sometimes spring up. In its 50th year, some traditions have been going on for much longer. For example, Easter has some strange traditions in the way it is celebrated around the world. On the holiday island of Corfu the strangest event takes place at noon on Saturday. As soon as the church bells toll, residents hurl giant water-filled earthenware pots from balconies to much cheering from those gathered (at an unsafe distance) below. Not everyone agrees about the ritual's origins. Some believe the tradition dates back 400 years, to when Venetian rulers would throw away the old to make room for the new. Others say the custom has a biblical basis relating to the resurrection and it's also suggested that all the noise is designed to scare away the devil. Once the spectacle is over, onlookers hurry past shards of terracotta to the parade route, where marching bands are tuning up and spit-roasted lamb is falling off the bone. Food often features – our own hot cross buns (reminding us of the crucifixion), Simnel cakes (fruit cake topped with eleven marzipan balls to represent the eleven apostles of Christ, minus Judas), and Easter eggs (symbolising new life and the rolling away of the stone in front of Jesus' tomb) all have connections to the season.

Other less wholesome traditions include spanking young ladies with willow branches in the Czech Republic – supposedly symbolising fertility; the handing out of packets of cigarettes and tobacco after the church service in Papua New Guinea (don't ask – I have no idea!); having nails driven through hands and feet in the Philippines to echo Christ's crucifixion; and Penance processions featuring floats adorned with religious statues carried through the streets for hours on end by privileged bearers in Andalusia. On a lighter note the citizens of Bermuda are busy flying their kites. The story goes that a teacher, who was looking for a visually effective way to demonstrate the ascension of Christ into heaven, made a kite and decorated it with an image of Jesus.

As we look to the future here in the benefice with a fresh vision for the future, I pray that your Easter, however you celebrate it, is full of joy, life and hope.

Many blessings and a Happy Resurrection Sunday to all.

Peter Callway, Rector

Gardening Club

The well attended February meeting and supper featured a very interesting presentation by Hunton Resident, Andrew Sharp, on "Supermarkets, Fresh Produce and Packaging". Andrew, who has worked as a farmer and as a technologist for both Tesco and Marks and Spencer, talked about the leading supermarkets in fresh produce and the importance of packaging in extending shelf life and reducing waste. He explained that supermarkets were always looking for something different, such as white strawberries or square melons, and brought along different varieties of grapes and melon for the audience to taste. He also kindly gave us some watermelon seeds to grow – if you would like some please contact Fay on 01622 820644 or fay.joyce@btinternet.com.

Edna has organised another private visit to Saltwood Castle on Wednesday 27th June at a cost of £26 each. This extensive tour of the castle and grounds, which will be led by the owner, Jane Clark, will be followed by a homemade cream tea. Places are allocated on a "first come, first served" basis - contact Lesley on 01622 820210 or email lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com if you would like to reserve one.

Gigs at the Hall

You will hopefully find elsewhere in the Herald the advert for Bubble Club's evening with Chris Difford in April – Cool for Cats indeed! We're hoping this will become a regular venue for the Yalding promoter, who has previously used venues in Whitstable, Canterbury and Farleigh for several years.

Our own gig schedule is sparking into life again with two return visits for artists we like – **Hannah Scott** singing and playing from her new CD, with Stefano Della Casa on cello (supported by local singer songwriter, Kirsty MacLeod) on **Saturday 19th May**, and **Trackdogs**, the Irish-American trumpet-led quartet from Madrid on **Saturday 2nd June**. Those of you that remember their early evening outdoor acoustic performance on the field in 2016, we are hoping to do a similar split set out/inside the village hall, with a BYO picnic assuming suitable weather in June!! Anyone wanting to catch their new CD a little earlier, they are at Cobham church on 5th April and at Rochester Sweeps during May Day weekend!

More ticket details in the next Herald, but pre-register with Mike on 01622 820429 or Steve on 01622 820403.

East Farleigh Farmers' Market

The April market will be held on Easter Sunday (1st April) and we apologise for the fact that it is on special day in the church calendar. You will appreciate that many of our stallholders have commitments at other markets, so it is very difficult for us to change our regular monthly slot. However, if you have guests, perhaps you would like to bring them along to browse the stalls, maybe purchase some Easter treats and enjoy a snack from our kitchen. You will be made very welcome and stall fee profits will be donated to a local charitable cause as usual. We look forward to your company!

THE BUBBLE CLUB PRESENTS

the bubble club

CHRIS DIFFORD

SOME FANTASTIC PLACE

MY LIFE IN AND OUT OF SQUEEZE

WITH SPECIAL GUEST BOO HEWERDINE

THURSDAY 19th APRIL 2018
HUNTON VILLAGE HALL
WEST STREET, HUNTON
(MAIDSTONE), KENT ME15 0RR
TICKETS £18
DOORS 7.30 MUSIC FROM 8.00

Tickets: £18 (plus handling charge) from
<https://www.wegotickets.com/event/433268>

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ridge, we 'refreshed' the upcoming weather forecast on our phones (this took forever with limited and patchy data access) which then informed us that our little camping spot was predicted sub-zero temperatures with 50mph winds, and wind chill feeling like -60F (-21.10C). All rules were disregarded at this point and we relocated everything to the sheltered area of land at a lower elevation and tried to sleep. That night I felt like I finally understood the description of howling winds but I was happy to be in North Carolina and out of Georgia. I awoke to the wind continuing to howl, sub-zero temperatures and snow. That morning was the coldest I have ever felt in my life – it was so cold that when I accidentally split water on my jacket it froze into droplets immediately.

100 Miles down ... a mere 2,090 to go

Thursday 15th of March was my longest (15 miles) and toughest day yet on the trail. We left Beech Gap (mile 90) before sunrise feeling well rested and ready to take on the day. Mile 97 marked the beginning of our 1000 ft ascent up to Albert Mountain – the peak of which marks the 100-mile point. This was all going smoothly until we reached mile 99.2, at which point the visible trail disappeared and in its place were sheer rocks with the AT markers on. We had another 500 ft to go vertically upwards over rocks and boulders. For someone with little legs and a huge pack I found this to be my biggest challenge yet. But I got over it, quite literally, and when I reached the top the views were awesome!

When we got to the campsite (Rock Gap Shelter, mile 105.4) we found trail magic* in the form of freshly cooked hotdogs, cans of fizzy drinks, snickers and honey buns. It was the best end to an awesome day. We also met 'Pappy', the oldest triple crowner (has previously hiked the AT, Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), and the Continental Divide Trail (CDT)). At the age of 87 he had decided to hike the AT again – which in his view is the toughest physically of all the three trails. It was a complete honour to meet him and to spend an evening listening to his incredible stories.

*Trail Magic – treats (food and drink, a lift etc) provided by 'trail angels' (usually previous thru-hikers).



Megan with the inspiring 'Pappy'

Robin Hood – Last Few Tickets

All performances of Robin Hood, The Panto are now sold out. There are just a few tickets available for the open dress rehearsal night on Wednesday 11th April at £5 each. Contact Sue on 01622 820709 or email suepink@icloud.com.

Events Cancelled

We are sorry to report that the Dawn Chorus Walk and Japanese Hanami Celebrations that were due to take place in the Community Orchard on 29th April have been cancelled. Further events are planned for the orchard in the summer.

Water Main Replacement

As we go to press, South East Water are due to attend the parish council meeting on 26th March to give an update on their plans for the Hunton Hill water main replacement project. We understand that they are looking to start the works in the middle of June and finish before the end of the school summer holidays, although the dates have not been confirmed yet. A report from the meeting will be published in next month's Herald or look out for more information on the Hunton Facebook page and community group or the village website, www.hunton.org.uk.

WI Dreams of a Warmer Cimate

As the snow in Hunton was melting, Dr Nick Willoughby took the WI ladies on a virtual trip around the tropical South Pacific Islands. Nick, a marine biologist, has worked for various government agencies, advising on fisheries and other developments in the vast area that makes up the 14 Island States of the South Pacific. He explained the different patterns of migration of peoples to the islands, accounting for differences in cultures and beliefs. His time in Fiji, Soloman Islands, Venuatu and Papua New Guinea gave him the opportunity to amass a fascinating collection of artefacts both natural and man-made. Everyone was impressed with the beautifully intricate woven fans and model boats as well as the stunning shells, corals and some of the carvings made from them. Behind each object was an interesting story of life on the islands which is now being eroded by influences of the West. The lasting impression of the evening was of the beauty of the natural world.

Our next WI meeting at the village club will be held on Tuesday 3rd April when Camilla Barker will be introducing the members to simple meditation. Doors open at 7pm. Coffee and cake will be served although the bar is available. New ladies always welcome.

New Wares Farm Planning Application

An application has been submitted to vary some of the conditions that were agreed when permission was granted for the new Berry Gardens HQ at Wares Farm on Redwall Lane. The application is for the maximum permitted number of HGVs entering or leaving the site between 11pm and 7am to be quadrupled from 8 to 32, and for the permitted noise levels to be increased. The application reference is 18/501181/FULL and full details can be found online on the Maidstone Borough Council planning portal. The parish council was due to discuss the application at their meeting on 26th March.

World Book Day Celebrations at Hunton School

As everyone turned up at school, the playground was full of different vibrant colours due to the fact they were dressed up in their World Book Day costumes. Children were playing in their characters such as: Mad Hatter, Harry Potter and Dennis the Menace. Walking into class was exciting, as everyone knew the fun activities that lay ahead! As a starter, Borton Class had to decode emojis that spelt out famous books. Next, the classes were mixed up so all ages of children were in each class. One of our teachers read the pupils a poem by Roald Dahl and we got asked to make our own silly poem up based on Little Red Riding Hood. The poetry was a fun, jumble of madness. We then ended the day with an assembly about sharing activities each class had done during that day. The assembly also promoted the importance of reading. That was the end of a fab day we had on World Book Day! All the children had lots of fun and went home passionate to start reading!

Soloman Winter and Jayden Solomon

At St Mary's Church in April

Flowers				Services	
1 st	All Helpers for Easter			Sunday 1st April – Easter Day	
8 th	Erica Hanna	15 th	Erica Hanna	11.00am Holy Communion – Rev David Jones	
22 nd	Sue Scott	29 th	Sue Scott	Sunday 8th April – Easter 2	
				9.30am Holy Communion 1662 – Rev Eileen Doyle	
				Sunday 15th April – Easter 3	
				11.00am Morning Prayer – Rev Peter Callway	
				Sunday 22nd April – Easter 4	
				11.00am Holy Communion – Rev David Jones	
				Sunday 29th April – Easter 5	
				10.30am Benefice Service at Hunton	

Hunton Village Club Opening Hours
Wed-Fri 8-11pm
Sun 12-2.30pm & 8-10.30pm

Changes to Church Services

After a period of consultation across the benefice, a new vision for the church to grow both in our faith and numbers, along with a number of changes to release time and energy, including a reduction in the number of services, has been agreed. At St Mary's annual church meeting a small group volunteered to explore options for the future including a possible evening service and other initiatives. The first visible step in the process will be a change in regular services at St Mary's, Hunton from May with a Holy Communion service on the first week of the month and a Family Service (Morning Prayer) on the third Sunday, both at 9.30am.

St George's Eve Walk and Lunch – Sunday 22nd April

Meet at the village club just before 11am for a circular walk of about one to one and a half hours. A buffet lunch will be available from 12.30pm for a donation of £6. Bring your family, friends and well-behaved dogs. Come to walk or just for lunch. If you do hope to attend, please contact Lesley so the walkers don't leave without you and she can try to organise enough food for everyone. Email lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com or phone 01622 820210. The next walk and lunch will take place on Saturday 12th May.

Beacon Men's Breakfast

The Beacon Men will be meeting for breakfast on Saturday 7th April at 9am at The Muggleton Inn, High Street, Maidstone, with guest speaker, Colin Cross. This benefice group is open to all men living in Hunton, Coxheath, East Farleigh, West Farleigh, Linton and beyond and its objective is to promote, through a programme of social events, opportunities to build friendships and to provide, without pressure, an opportunity to explore what the Christian faith is about. A whole range of events is planned throughout the year including a boat trip, petanque, a film night, and a curry night. Further details from Mike Marsh on 07595 428639 or email beaconmen.coxheath@gmail.com. You can also find more information on the benefice website - unitedbenefice.church/beacon-men or on the Beacon Men Facebook page.

Village Lunch Thanks

Thanks to everyone who supported the recent series of six Thursday village lunches. We were treated to some delicious homemade soups and cakes, and Roger's home-roasted gammon, and it was good to see the club buzzing with locals who enjoyed catching up with friends and neighbours. We were pleased to welcome some new faces as well as the "regulars", and also the Linton Walkers who arranged one of their weekly outings to start and finish at the club. These, and other village events, wouldn't be possible without the band of helpers who make and donate food and volunteer their time, so a huge thanks to everyone involved. Just over £1,000 was raised, which has been donated to St Mary's Church and the club. The next series of lunches begin on Thursday 25th October.

Lesley Lee

Church and Churchyard Working Parties - Saturday 31st March & Saturday 28th April: 9am – 12 noon

This spring the snowdrops round St Mary's Church have again provided a wonderful show. When they die back and can be split, it is hoped to spread them further. These have been visible thanks to volunteers keeping the grass cut last year and generally maintaining the churchyard. Dates for the first two working parties are above and others will be advertised later in the year. The team usually try to tackle some cleaning inside the church as well as jobs in the churchyard – volunteers decide what they wish to take on. These are very friendly events with a coffee or tea break when homemade cakes or biscuits are provided. If you can give up even an hour of your time on any of the working party dates this year or volunteer to do some mowing your help will be gratefully received. Contact Lesley for more information or to let her know if you hope to attend so she can take enough supplies for the coffee break! Phone 01622 820210 or email lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com

Hunton Bowls Club
Coffee Morning

Saturday 21st April at 10am in the Clubhouse
(situated behind the village hall)
Plant Stall : Tombola : Cake Stall : Bring & Buy
All proceeds to our proposed new clubhouse
Donations of plants and cakes would be most welcome!

Please come along and support us!



If you would like to join our friendly club
Please contact Angela Baptie on
01622 820625 or angela.baptie@btinternet.com
No experience necessary!

April	1 st	8 th	15 th	22 nd	29 th
Coxheath	11.00 HC	11.00 MP	11.00 HC	11.00 FS	
E. Farleigh	09.30 HC	08.00 HC; 11.00 FS	09.30 HC	08.00 HC	Benefice Service at Hunton
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 April, please