



Next Editors: Liz Oliver & Graham Dolman: herald@hunton.org.uk
All items for the next edition of the Herald to the Editors by 10th December

Hunton Christmas Fair

There's been months of planning put into this event, which takes place in the church and churchyard on Saturday December 14th from 3.30pm until 6.00pm. It's all coming together well and is promising to be a great occasion again this year, with the stalls inside the church and the BBQ, mulled wine and refreshments in the churchyard. Entrance to the Fair is £1.00 and free for children.

Star Guest at the Hunton Fair! We are delighted to report that Father Christmas will be dropping into the Hunton Christmas Fair for a quick stop in his very busy schedule at this time of year. He plans to arrive at 4pm and will stay for an hour and a half, so that he can see all the children who want to talk to him, before he has to rush off to visit other children too. Every child is welcome and, while there may be a little wait to see him, Mother Christmas and her Elf will be on hand to keep children busy with crayons, pictures and a lucky dip. Gifts for every child - £5.00 entry.

A special 'thank you' to everyone who has contributed to arranging this event and for the donations of bottles for the bottle stall and cakes for the cake stall.

How Safe Are Our Roads?

Hunton Parish Council are seeking to gauge support for a reduction in the speed limit along East Street, from the national limit of 60mph to 40mph.

We have started by posting flyers through the doors of East Street residents and, if a majority support this reduction, we will engage the services of a speed-monitoring contractor to gather evidence on the current average speeds. If average speeds are above 40mph then we will apply for a speed limit reduction with Kent County Council Highways. The speed monitoring would cost £450 and be funded by the Parish Council.

Whilst this is of primary concern to East Street residents, we recognise that all villagers are highly likely to use this road on a regular basis and therefore may also have a view. So, wherever you live, if you are in favour of this reduction, please email Jonny Goddard at jghuntonpc@gmail.com. If you do make contact, please confirm your name and address to enable us to keep track of replies.

A Happy Christmas from the Hunton Herald!

We have now started our second round of the editorial rota system under which a team of two editors works on the next month's Herald. So far it has gone as well as we could have hoped, keeping the Herald going with fresh ideas and initiatives, while the Editorial teams have enjoyed the experience and found it less daunting and onerous than many feared - helped by the fact that it is for one month at a time, twice a year!

A big thank you to all those involved in the publication and circulation of this valued village asset.

Moving into 2020, if you or anyone you know would be interested in joining the editorial team, or if you have any thoughts or suggestions on what should appear in or disappear from the Herald, do please let us know by getting in touch with James or Andrea Forster (forsters.hunton@btinternet.com).

Your Local Contacts:		Village Hall Booking:	www.huntonvillagehall.co.uk
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Huntonwatch: huntonwatch@gmail.com	820403
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	'Potholes' Hotline (KCC)	03000 418181
Pond and Tree Warden: Mike Summersgill	820429	Community Warden: Adam McKinley	07811 271021
Rector: Revd. Peter Callway	747570*	PCSO - Martin Chivers	101
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: Jeff Young	746541
Churchwarden: Alison Ellman-Brown	820288	WI President: Ann Sawtell	820731
Village Club: Gil Robertson	820059		
Maidstone Police	690690 or 101	*not available on Fridays; **not available on Mondays or Tuesdays	

Contact details for other village clubs and organisations are available at www.hunton.org.uk/contacts

Parish Council Contacts	
Parish Clerk: Sharon Goodwin - 681238, huntonpc@googlegmail.com	Chairman: David Heaton - 820678, dhhuntonpc@gmail.com
Clr Jonny Goddard - 820096, jonny@cheveneyfarm.co.uk	Clr Roger Lee - 820210, rlhuntonpc@btinternet.com
Clr Tony Stanbridge - 820721, tshuntonpc@gmail.com	Clr Annette Trought - 820448, annette@trought.com
Clr Helen Ward - 820810, hwhuntonpc@wardy.org	Clr Gary Thomas - 820691, gthuntonpc@gmail.com

Diary Dates	
Sun 1st Dec Kent Police Male Voice Choir , Coxheath Village Hall, 3pm	Tues 3rd Dec WI Supper , doors open at 7pm for 7.30pm start
Thur 5th Dec Final Village Club Lunch , from 12.30pm	Fri 6th Dec Village Club AGM , 8:15 pm at the Club
Sat 7th Dec Quiz Night , from 8 pm in the Club	Mon 9th Dec Hunton School Christingle Service , 6pm
Sat 14th Dec Hunton Christmas Fair , St Mary's Church, 3.30pm to 6pm	Tue 17th Dec Pre-School Christmas Bazaar , Hunton Village Hall, 10am to 11.30am
Fri 20th Dec White House Carol Service , 7.30 for 8pm	
Sun 22nd Dec St Mary's Church Carol Service , 6pm, followed by mulled wine and mince pies	

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

In last year's December pastoral letter, I wrote about the tradition of carol singing, and mentioned that the first Nativity Play was not performed by children in the UK, but in a cave by monks in Italy. St. Francis of Assisi and his followers acted in the first play in 1223 to remind the local population that Jesus was born for them, as he was born into a poor family like theirs and not to a rich family.

St. Francis told the part of each character in the story himself, using wooden figures in the play. After a couple of years, the play had become so popular that real people played the parts of the characters in the story.

I'm sure we all have fond memories of nativity plays we, or our families, have been involved in. One person writes: "when I was seven, I was cast as an angel. As I was going up onto the stage I tripped over my 'robe' – a bed sheet my mum cut some holes in – and cut my chin on some scenery. My teacher had to stop the show for five minutes while they cleaned up the blood on the stage." Another tells us "One of the sheep wet himself during my daughter's Nativity. The pool of wee was quite realistic for a stable." And another: "My little brother was a bit of a tearaway at school and me and my mum turned up at his Nativity to find he had been cast as 'straw'. He was dressed in yellow and just had to lie there. My mum was furious." If you want to see a group of grown adults acting like lunatics, go to a Nativity play. One parent recalls "At my children's school, parents arrive an hour early to get seats in the front row and bring professional recording equipment. You'd have thought some Hollywood actor had come in as a ringer, the amount of camera flashes that go off. I've had a dad stand up in front of me and refuse to sit down so that he could record his little darling being third sheep from the left or something. It got so bad it was discussed in the Governor's meeting and they tried to put a ban on 'phones and cameras but it hasn't made any difference."

In some countries such as Italy and Malta, and many South American countries, the crib is the most important Christmas decoration. The city of Naples, in Italy, has used cribs to decorate houses and Churches since the 1020s! That's even before St. Francis of Assisi put on his play. Naples is also the home to the world's largest nativity crib scene. It's in the 'Museo Nazionale di S. Martino' and has 162 people, 80 animals, angels, and about 450 other smaller objects.

I hope that all your Advent and Christmas celebrations are successful and that you have a wonderful Christmas. Details of events and services across the benefice can be found at www.unitedbenefice.church/christmas.

Many blessings, Peter Callway, Rector.

Tales from a smallholding: How we need the rain!

We rely heavily on rain for our water supply and the last month has seen our coffers fill full to the brim, so we feel in a wealthy position. We have a 12,000 litre tank that collects rain from the barn and we pump water out to the 1,000 litre IBCs (individual bulk containers). The need for water is most acute in the summer months as the pigs need it to wallow and to have the luxury of a hose down, as well as for drinking, and the sheep also increase their intake when the grass is dry. We therefore feel grateful for every drop in the water bank! [Ed. But can it stop now please?!]

We had a major disaster in the early years when we originally filled troughs and wallows direct from the main tank. After using some water for the vet to hose down at the end of her visit, I was completely unaware that the tap had not been turned off! Returning to the field a few hours later, I found we had lost 6,000 litres of water at the beginning of high summer. Thereafter I felt I paid the penance all summer, carrying and carting cans and buckets of water! The immediate issue however was that I had flooded the farrowing pen with Dotty and her piglets inside! Fortunately the floor was not level and rose to the back of the pen, where Dotty and her litter had retreated while I swept and mopped and mopped and swept until they had a cosy dry pen again! As a result, this is not a risk we now take as everything gets tapped off from an IBC.

Sue Heaton

Kicks Count can benefit from your used postage stamps!

As Christmas approaches please remember we are collecting for Kicks Count, a brilliant charity that does absolutely vital work. Kicks Count aims to help mums-to-be have the correct knowledge and understanding throughout their pregnancy and is working to reduce the number of stillbirths and neo-natal deaths by encouraging closer observation of foetal movements.

Please save your stamps and trim excess paper from around the stamp leaving a 1cm border, slightly less is acceptable providing the stamp itself and its perforations haven't been damaged. Then just pop them into an envelope addressed to me and post them through the Club's letterbox.

Thank you! Tricia

Christmas Bazaar in Hunton Village Hall.

Hunton Pre-School will be holding their annual Christmas Bazaar on Tuesday, 17th December, between 10am - 11:30am, when there will be lots of exciting stalls for you to purchase some last minute gifts.

We also have our famous raffle, which is always extremely popular due to the amazing hampers put together by Lesa at the Pre-School. This event is open to everyone so please pop in! We would also welcome any donations towards our raffle or tombola.

Missing Your "Lollipop Man"?

Do you know someone locally who could spare 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the afternoon, during school term time? The Hunton school crossing patroller helps to ensure the safety of children crossing West Street in the morning and afternoons but the position has been vacant since September. This is a paid position with a uniform, full training and support provided by KCC Safer Mobility Team.

The KCC Safer Mobility Team Leader met with parents and explained the challenges of finding the 'right person' so we're reaching out to our community for help. Child pedestrians are one of the most vulnerable road users. Around 72% of RTA's involve children crossing busy streets with most accidents happening between 8 am and 8.59 am or 3 pm and 6:59 pm. So we really need your help to find a responsible, community-minded, local person who doesn't mind working with children.

If you know someone who could spare a couple of hours a week, please encourage them to call Kent Safer Mobility team on 03000 422401 and leave a message, or send an email to scp@kent.gov.uk

Bowls Club News

With the bowls season well and truly behind us, 2019 will be one to remember for its achievements, disappointments and the loss of three long standing friends and members.

It has also been a challenging year, with a full fixture list and a decline in membership; cancellations of some friendly matches were inevitable. Despite not bringing back any trophies, as a small club we played well in all our league matches. As always our Ladies have enjoyed another busy season of tournaments, league and friendly matches. Our own club competitions were well supported with some of our new members reaching the finals. Congratulations to Glyn Bell who successfully reached the finals of the Maidstone Triples League Singles. Well done, Glyn!

Our social and fund raising events have been both successful and enjoyable. Quiz and Race Nights held at the Village Club along with Uno Evenings and BBQ's - we even managed to entertain the WI and Pre-School and look forward to doing much the same this forthcoming season. Our main achievement this year is that of the replacement of the club's changing rooms. We reported in the June issue of the Herald that the club had a shortfall of around £5,000. We are pleased to report that we have now reached our goal and the work is well underway.

Our thanks to the Hunton Herald and to the Parish Council for their donations and to everyone who has supported and helped with our fund raising, including our Treasurer for digging a little deeper into the club's purse and for our own successful application to the KCC's Community Grant. Thanks also to Paul Denyer of Firmin's for donating materials for the internal works of the new building, Tony Campbell and Mike Leach for a splendid job clearing the site of the old building and, not forgetting our own members, for all their hard work. We rounded off the season with our Presentation Evening, which took place on the 28th October at the Cornwallis Suite in Maidstone.

The Promise and the Gift

All Saints Church, West Farleigh, invites everyone to join them for an evening of contemporary Christmas worship with music, readings and seasonal refreshments on Saturday 21st December starting at 6.45pm.

Quiz Night - Saturday 7th December, from 8 pm

This is another 'just for fun' quiz night at the Club, no entrance fee or prizes. All are welcome, with teams of up to 6 persons. If you don't have a team, not to worry, please come along and we will arrange for you to join one.

Thursday Village Lunches

A reminder that the final lunch for this series is on Thursday 5th December in the Club. Please attend if you can and help raise funds for St Mary's Church and Club projects.

A Trip Down Memory Lane

My first visit to Hunton was on Monday June 16th 1947, the first day of a new coarse fishing season. Grandad collected me from school in his Ford 8 with its orange traffic indicators that popped out on the right or left side of the car when one needed to turn. Leaving Rochester we passed through Maidstone and arrived at the Bull Inn around teatime, parking fifty yards further down the road on a grass verge, close to the bridge over the delightful River Beult, a tributary of the River Medway. We had come to fish the river just upstream of the bridge on the left hand bank looking upstream. Choosing an area close to some oak trees, I caught five small perch on that first visit and the memory still lives with me as if it was yesterday.

The five bar gate leading into the field is still in place today, though the cattle have been replaced by horses; some oaks are looking older, the hedgerows taller and thicker and the riverside fields are an oasis of wildlife. In fact, they are greatly improved being a triple SSI; there are more birds, mammals, dragon and damselflies than in my young days. It's truly amazing the amount of wildlife we anglers who sit quietly beside the river see during our day. Kingfishers are not a rarity, but can be expected to be seen zipping up and down the river, sometimes perching on a rod poked out from the reeds. In the evening we usually see a Barn Owl quartering the riverside fields, and if you're lucky, as I have been, you might see a Hobby. Its grace, speed and agility is amazing. It can take a swallow on the wing but also takes dragonflies.

Hunton has never disappointed me over the past 70 years. Yes, the Bull Inn is now a house when in the 1950's, as a teenager, the Bull was the place to visit on a Saturday evening with the attraction of bar billiards, a jukebox and lots of attractive girls! The red phone box has gone, along with the small village shop, the surrounding countryside has changed dramatically from the days of hop fields, cherries, strawberries, apples pears, black and red currants, ripening corn and barley. In September East-Enders in their thousands escaped their poverty to go hop-picking, living in huts, some huts can still be seen, e.g. near Hunton bridge. I don't know what today's children would think about living in such a small and basic hut for a few weeks, as those boys and girls from the East End did in the 40's and 50's, but, there were times when I was deep in the jungles of Colombia, Peru, Brazil, Ecuador or Venezuela, when my mind would drift back to my time spent in the peaceful Hunton countryside.

Back in the 1950's many of my summer and autumn weekends, along with school holidays, were spent camping on the banks of the River Beult at Hunton. My friends and I made many friends with the locals, both young and old. Some days we would help a local farmer for a few hours, then return to our fishing during the evening time, often fishing into the early hours of the next morning. I built up a good relationship with a local farm foreman who realised we could be trusted, so allowed us to hunt rabbits and Wood Pigeon, which we turned into a rabbit or pigeon stew in a Dutch oven. The meal was easy to prepare, so when we returned to our campsite, we had a hot meal waiting for us. We had some good shooting over a wide area and never once did we target a game bird. Sometimes we would spend two or three days doing jobs for the farm foreman, getting paid about 25p, but a small fortune then to us lads.

A Quote by Mario Puzo: "What is past is past. Never go back". That's not true of Hunton, the village hall is as nice as ever, no doubt greatly improved from what I read in the Hunton Herald. Hunton Court with its magnificent trees and parkland still looks as it did in the 1950's, the villagers are as friendly and helpful and I hardly see any litter on the roads. On my last visit in June I spotted two boys picking up the odd item of litter. The villagers must be congratulated on the way they look after their houses and gardens. There is no unsightly large housing complex or multi-story block of flats blighting this delightful village. Long may it continue.

Martin James MBE

Hunton Village Club Opening Hours

Wed-Fri 8-11pm Sun 12-2.30pm & 8-10.30pm

Remembrance Sunday

Once again the Church was an impressive demonstration of the effort that Wendy and Iain Simmons, and their team of helpers, have devoted to marking this important service. Although this year was more of a curtain raiser for the 75th anniversary of WW2 ending next year, there was still a lot of new information presented about the fallen from Hunton, about some who returned, about life in the village then, and about those living here now who had stories of their own to tell.

Already we have more names to work on and more stories to explore for next year e.g. a tail gunner who survived to live in Lughorse Lane, an infantryman who landed on Gold Beach on D Day, a soldier who entered Hitler's bunker the day after he committed suicide, a diary of where bombs fell in our village ... but the more we can gather the better the record we can create. Stories do not have to be military (and we have been delighted to find so much on the lives of those who were not). It has also been interesting to see how many stories crossover one another, so what may appear unimportant to you, can help fill in a part of a jigsaw when added to the wider record! Finally, a huge thank you to all those who have come forward so far with your own stories and recollections, or those of their parents or grandparents. It has been fascinating and we look forward to more to come.

James Forster and David Heaton, forsters.hunton@btinternet.com / barnhillgardening@gmail.com

Hunton Gardening Club Event

On Saturday 9th November, Hunton Gardening Club held a social evening in the Club. About 25 people attended and listened to an interesting talk on mushroom foraging given by Roy Watson, a local enthusiast.

We learnt that there are several common poisonous varieties such as Death Cap and Magic Mushrooms but many other local edible varieties such as the Common Field Mushroom and the Horse Mushroom. We were given tips on how to identify poisonous fungi and how to cook the best edible ones. There were many questions from the audience that Roy answered.

Thanks to Roy and everyone who helped set up this event.

Village Club AGM - Friday 6th December, 8:15 pm

The AGM is an important meeting for the Club. It is a members Club and the committee is keen to hear from the members, what their likes and dislikes are and how they would like to see things progress in the future. There are vacancies on the committee, which we would very much like to be filled, so that fresh ideas and impetus is continued.

If you have any items for the agenda and/or would like to join the committee would you please let Gil know. He can be contacted by e-mail at gilbert@breachfarm.com.

There will be a drop in consultation run by the Parish Council in January in the Village Club to discuss the Maidstone Borough Council Call for Sites from Hunton. Date to be confirmed in the next issue of the Hunton Herald.

Family Craft Day

About 30 people of all ages gathered in the Club for a pre Christmas family craft session on Sunday 3rd November, sustained by tea and some excellent cakes! It was greatly enjoyed by all who spent a productive afternoon making pictures and gift tags, cards, Santas, fairies and Christmas trees out of card and lots of glitter!

Thanks to Edna and her daughter Helen, as well as Christine Summersgill, for all their hard work in making this such a good way to open the Christmas festivities!

Hunton WI gets Crafty

At our November meeting the ladies made colourful flowers from felt and beads which were then turned into brooches or hair slides, making very pretty personal gifts for Christmas - if anyone could bear to give them away! This is always a very social evening and even the most ham-fisted amongst the ladies succeeded in making some lovely items.

The next WI meeting will be held, as usual, on the first Tuesday of the month (3rd December) at Hunton Village Club, doors open at 7pm for a 7.30 start. This month is another social evening with supper, Christmas quizzes and games organised by the committee. New ladies are always very welcome.

At St Mary's Church in December

Flowers		Services			
1st December (Advent Ring) - Sue Scott & Faye Joyce		Sunday 1st December	9.30am – Holy Communion - Rev Peter Callway		
15th December - Sue Martin, Liz Oliver		Sunday 15th December	9.30am – Family Service - Rev Eileen Doyle		
22nd December (Carol Service and Christmas): All helpers		Sunday 22nd December	6.00pm - Carol Service – Rev David Jones / Rev Laura Faulkner		
		Tuesday 24th December	10.00pm – Holy Communion – Rev David Jones		
		Wednesday 25th December	10.00am – Family Service & Holy Communion - Rev David Jones		
Other services in the Benefice					
December	1st	8th	15th	22nd	24/25th
Coxheath	11.00 HC	11.00 MP	16.30 Carol Service	11.00 FS	17.00 FS & 23.15 HC (24 th) 10.45 FS & HC
On Sunday 29 th December, there will be a Benefice Service in Coxheath					
E. Farleigh	09.30 MP	08.00 HC	18.00pm Carol Service	08.00 HC; 16.00 C	16.00 C & 23.30 HC (24 th) No service (25 th)
Linton	09.30 FS	09.30 HC	16.00 Carol Service	08.00 MP	23.30 HC (24 th) 09.30 FS & HC (25 th)
W. Farleigh	08.00 HC	09.30 MP	18.00pm: Carol Service	09.30 HC	21.30 HC (24 th) No service (25 th)
HC Holy Communion, MP Morning Prayer, FS Family Service, C Christingle					

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