

Outlook On Oxney

Wittersham, Stone & Ebony Community Magazine



Ewe fed up with lockdown?

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Dear Readers,

As we go to press we eagerly await news of the birth of our Editor Sam's baby – which was due on the same day this February edition went to print ... 18th January. Things don't always go according to plan, however, and for the first time in living memory (well, in Outlook memory) Sam has missed the deadline.

Sam's news is a wonderful reminder that despite Covid 19, life still goes on and that Spring – and vaccines - are on the way. Snowdrops are out, daffodils and primroses bravely coming up and Mother Nature, even with climate change, is still doing her thing.

February may still be grey but we're cheering it up with a heart-warming story of Swan Lovers to celebrate St Valentine's Day and, having survived Christmas, Oxney's very own Scrooge is back with a humorous look at love, while our Posh Pancake recipe is perfect for a romantic dinner with, or without, the alcohol, for family pancakes on Shrove Tuesday.

Once the Covid numbers are under control and we're all allowed out to play again, local clubs and groups will be up and running and perhaps David Fletcher's piece on Theatricals in Wittersham might whet a few appetites to start a new amateur dramatics group. The three Oxney villages abound in artistic talent and it would be great to have local plays and pantomimes and even a Talent show, like those Ginny Ridley writes about in A Lifetime of Art.

With Sam busy producing her own addition (geddit?), it's been up to the B team to produce this edition together, and we very much hope you'll enjoy reading it and that you'll think about sending us your own contributions for future issues. We'd love to have your stories, poems, sketches and pictures and we're really grateful to everyone who has helped and contributed to this February issue.

Particular thanks go to Jo, who's patience has been boundless, and to our stalwart delivery team who are donning gloves and masks in order to safely get your *Outlook* magazines delivered.

Stay safe, stay strong and stay in touch.
Chris and Peter.

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A Lifetime of Art

I have always loved art. As a child, towards the end of the war I was sent across London, gas mask round my neck, to a lady who taught us to draw. I was not allowed to use paint and being someone who loved colour and light I found my lessons boring! Now I realise how important those lessons were. I didn't take art seriously until we moved to Wittersham over 30 years ago. With no children around and enough room for an attic studio I turned from pastels and watercolour to oils. I joined the Tuesday Painters in Rye and made many new friends. Since those days I have exhibited at the Royal Academy on several occasions, the Mall Gallery and shown at many other countrywide exhibitions. I became gallery artist for two galleries, one in London and one in Hampshire. They were wonderful years, painting landscapes here, around Rye, and abroad, and often using my grandchildren as models. I also did many cards for Medici and always painted the church Christmas card.

One year when Simon was with the Wittersham Church we put on some hugely successful events. One was called 'The Talents' – the talent in the village was amazing, sometimes completely unexpected. It gave huge pleasure to all who visited and it made a considerable amount for the church. Now being ancient and a widow, I find portraiture – always a love of mine – very absorbing and a constant challenge. It is exciting to have commissions via website (courtesy of Kay in The Street). When you are nearing 90 years there is always something or somebody to paint. In recent years I have painted many people and pets that have passed on. To give pleasure and maybe comfort is very rewarding. How lucky I am – particularly during Covid!

Ginny Ridley



A Scrooge Guide to Valentine's Day

Bah Humbug! We've only just got over the Christmas spectacle of giving away things you don't want in return for things that other people don't want, and now we have Valentine's Day on the horizon. I hope you all enjoyed my little Christmas tale about Santa and his sleigh, but I notice nobody has dropped off any little cheques for the royalties yet. Typical.

Anyway, the editorial team have asked me tap into my centuries of wisdom to help everyone survive Valentine's Day – financially that is.

You will probably still be trying to forget last year's celebration, when you went to that very mediocre restaurant that had tripled its prices and halved its level of service just because it put a candle on the table and re-wrote its menu full of awful Love puns. Well, the good news is that this year it will almost certainly be closed due to lockdown; ^{sad} for the staff of course, but money in the bank for you. Not that you can get off scot-free this year, but I have a few tips on how to minimise the (financial) pain.

I shall illustrate the steps by means of a traditional boy-girl or man-woman scenario, but of course other personal pronouns and less traditional relationships are available these days so please modify the guide to suit yourself.

1.Flowers. There probably won't be any available this year despite the Brexit Trade settlement, as the lorries will all be stuck on the Hook of Holland where they all come from due to an EU dispute about something or other. There will of course also be French disruption at the Channel crossing, for no apparent reason, so there is your excuse for not buying grossly over-expensive red roses that die the next day. Instead, pray that the daffodils are out and ask your kindly neighbour if you can pinch a few from her garden, stick them in a vase or a jug and away you go.

2.Chocolates. Luckily the same cross-channel problems will stop the influx of hideously expensive Belgian chocolates too, so just go with a bar of her favourite chocolate, and wrap it up in leftover Xmas paper (you didn't throw that away did you?).

3.The Meal. You could lash out on a takeaway, but not many places will deliver out here, even if they can find the place, and anyway you've probably already tried everything on the menus of those that do. Much better to sneak down to the supermarket a day or so before and get one of their 'Meal for a tenner' deals. Ideally you should cook it yourself, having sat her down out of the way with a glass of prosecco (also on offer) and well-chosen film from Netflix (others are available) that you don't want to see anyway. Make sure there is a candle on the table, some suitable music on, and don't forget to dim the lights (saves on electricity too).

4.Be sure to start off the day by taking her a cup of tea in bed, and breakfast if you can manage it (even toast and marmalade tastes better when someone serves it to you in bed). After that, offer to walk the dog, vacuum the house, do the washing up, even have a go at ironing. She'll decline most of your offers of course, but you get loads of Brownie points. Keep that up all day and you'll have enough credit to go fishing/golfing or whatever for the rest of the month. Best of all, you'll have saved so much money, compared with the usual credit-busting extravagance, that you'll be able to afford that new bit of kit you wanted, and with no complaints.

5.Repeat the same basic steps for her Birthday and you're on the way to buying all the fishing tackle/golfing kit you could possibly need (but wait for the sales, obviously). Now – about my fee

SWAN LOVERS

The courtship of swans is the most beautiful ritual. Down on the marsh you may be lucky enough to watch this display which is more like a ballet of love, loyalty and affection. The clumsy efforts of humans to draw attention to their Valentinish regard for each other, are feeble by comparison. Little love-poems, decked in roses and ribbons around hearts, may be the best we can do.

A pair of swans begin by cruising along the water, side by side, wings lowered, as they dip their bills, raise their heads and turn to preen their feathers in unison. They dip, raise and preen obsessively. Now and then, one raises its head high, pausing to watch the other. This dipping and preening become perfectly synchronised as it gets faster and faster.

Suddenly this stops, and they rest, breast to breast as they raise and lower their graceful necks, looking into each other's eyes. This ends in a beautiful moment when necks intertwine and one swan rests its neck over the other – a gesture of pure love, anticipating what is to come:

The Cob paddles alongside his mate and mounts her. Her tail feathers sink and as he seizes her neck, she is almost submerged. She raises her tail to welcome him. Ten seconds and it's over! They both rise up and beat their wings while making soothing, groaning sounds. They then wash and preen and shake their feathers, tails wagging happily.

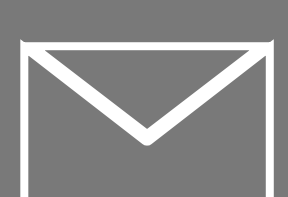
We may send a hundred cards to our lovers, but surely nothing can compare to how the swans set about Valentine's Day.

Jill Metcalfe

Acknowledgements: Mark Nicolaides, "Swan Life".



Illustration: Chris Lee



Crêpes Suzette

These posh pancakes are perfect for Shrove Tuesday or Valentine's Day – or both!

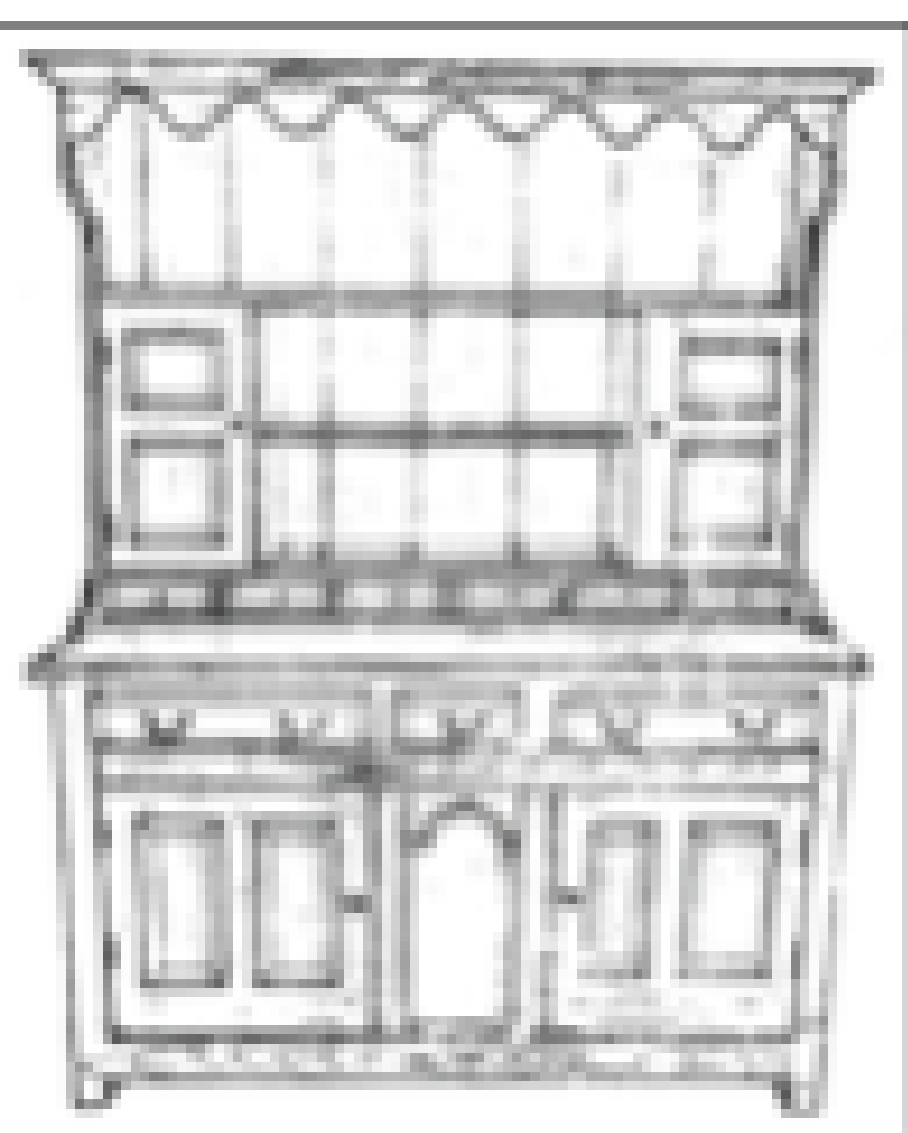
Ingredients:

- 110g/4oz plain flour
- pinch of salt
- 2 eggs
- 200ml/7fl oz milk mixed with 75ml/3fl oz water
- 50g/2oz butter
- zest of 1 medium orange
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
-
- **For the sauce**
- 150ml/5fl oz orange juice
- Zest of 1 medium orange
- Zest and juice of 1 small lemon
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 3 tbsp Grand Marnier, Cointreau or brandy
(or orange juice if preferred)
- 50g/2oz unsalted butter
- a little extra Grand Marnier, for flaming, optional.



Method

1. Sift the flour and salt into a large mixing bowl. Make a well in the centre and break in the eggs. Whisk the eggs, incorporating any bits of flour from around the edge of the bowl as you do so.
2. Gradually whisk in small quantities of the milk/water mixture until the batter is smooth and creamy.
3. Melt 50g/2oz of butter in a small pan. Spoon 2 tbsp of it into the batter and whisk it in, then pour the rest into a bowl and use it to lubricate the pan, using a wodge of kitchen paper to smear it round before you make each pancake. Stir the orange zest and caster sugar into the batter.
4. Get the pan really hot, turn the heat down to medium and pour in a little batter to make small, thin crêpes, one at a time. As soon as the batter hits the hot pan, tip it around from side to side to get the base evenly coated with batter. Cook for about half a minute, until underside is golden brown, then flip the pancake over with a pan slice or palette knife – and cook for another minute or two. You should end up with 15-16 crêpes.
5. Stack the pancakes between sheets of greaseproof paper and keep warm while you make the rest.
6. For the sauce, mix all the ingredients – with the exception of the butter – in a bowl. Melt the butter in the frying pan, pour in the sauce, and heat very gently. Place the first crêpe in the pan and give it time to warm through before folding it in half and then in half again to make a triangular shape. Slide this onto the very edge of the pan, tilt the pan slightly so the sauce runs back into the centre, then add the next crêpe. Continue like this until they're all re-heated, folded and well soaked with the sauce.
7. Heat a ladle by holding it over a gas flame or by resting it on the edge of a hotplate, then, away from the heat, pour a little liqueur or brandy into it, return it to the heat to warm the spirit, then set light to it. Carry the flaming ladle to the table over the pan and pour the flames over the crêpes before serving on the warmed plates.



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Sadly, there isn't a drama group on the Isle of Oxney today but that hasn't always been the case.

In the 1970s and 80s the Wittersham theatrical group, The Blades, were a very well-known and successful group. In fact, amateur dramatics on the Isle of Oxney can be traced back many centuries. In those days Wittersham, along with other Marsh villages, became renowned for their passion plays which were performed around this part of Kent. Of course in those days they were performed in the open air and a look at the local field names which can be found on the village tithe maps would indicate that the place used locally for these plays was at Ham Green in the field alongside Cooks Farmhouse.

In the late Victorian and Edwardian period concert parties seem to have been popular and there is mention of several taking place in Wittersham, although these would have had to take place in some of the large private houses in the district as there was no village hall in existence then. The first hall on the island that could be used for such shows was St Luke's Hall which is now a private house and is right by the gate to St John's church. It was given to the village by Miss Laurence Alma Tadema and was used for teaching various crafts as well as for putting on shows. The reason for the hall being called St Luke's Hall and not St John's is that Miss Alma Tadema was a Catholic and therefore didn't want it being associated with a Church of England church.

The island has also been the home of several well known faces from the 'arts', the most obvious being Sir Donald Sinden who resided at Ebony for more than fifty years, but others who were equally as famous in their time were the actor Norman Forbes Robertson who lived at Stocks House, theatre critic Arthur Symons who lived at Island Cottage, Harcourt Williams actor and one time manager of the Old Vic who also lived at Ebony. Actor Gerald Campion (of Billy Bunter fame) lived for several years at Rose Hill whilst his next door neighbour was another actor, Alex Munro. One famous theatre set designer who made a big contribution to Wittersham was Lawrence Irving, grandson of Sir Henry Irving. The Triptych displayed on St John's Church altar was painted by him. He also edited the parish magazine 'Window on Wittersham' for many years.

However, his greatest local achievement was in 1952 when he was able to bring to Wittersham a nativity play entitled 'The Coming Of Christ'. This was no ordinary nativity play. Written by the then Poet Laureate, John Masefield, with music by Gustav Holst it had been performed just once prior to Wittersham and that was in Canterbury Cathedral. Through his theatre contacts Lawrence was able to gain the rights to have it performed in St John's Church, Wittersham. He was also able to use the original costumes which had been designed by the theatre costume designer, Charles Ricketts. In addition, he was able to involve several professional actors including Harcourt Williams to play alongside locals such as the village blacksmith and the local shopkeeper.

It was, obviously, a very important event in the village having professional actors playing in the local nativity play but little did the villagers realise that at least three of these then unknown actors would later become quite famous. TV and film actor Robert Speaight was one, film star Peter Finch another and the third was John Schlesinger, later to become an Oscar winning film director.

Dave Fletcher.

Oxney Local History Group



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The Two Bears

It was 1973, not long before the greatest decade of rock and pop music drew to a close, J and P had each travelled many miles north to a cold climate – Durham. J joined the rowing club; P joined the hockey club. One morning, J had to collect the boathouse key from the fellow rower that P shared a room with. She knocked on the door, and with his head in a book, the room-mate shouted, “Come in”, unaware that P, just out of the shower, was sitting stark naked on the bed right in front of the door. The door opened, and J was never quite the same again after seeing P Bear. They drifted off in separate ways: J Inter-Railed right across Europe, and P drove and hitched across the USA.

Durham’s a small place, however, and they moved in regularly intersecting social circles. One day, J was walking down one of Durham’s many hilly streets when she dropped her files all over the road, which P happened to be walking up, so he helped her collect them. They went for a coffee, and a year or so later, they were married, and still are.

If only she’d realised, back then, what kind of bear he might become: Grizzly.

J&P



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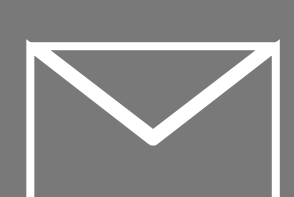
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A dark starry sky is one of the most magical sights imaginable, though research shows that light pollution is leaving fewer stars than ever visible to the naked eye, and we need your help to track how light levels are changing.

Our annual Star Count is back, and we'd like you to help us map of the nation's view of the night sky - this year, from home.

It's easy to be a part of Star Count: just look to the heavens between 6-14 February and count the number of stars you see in the constellation of Orion.

It's a safe, outside activity to do as a family or household, from your home, garden, balcony or even bedroom window, and everyone can take part.

As we're all asked to stay at home, please don't travel to do a Star Count.
To find out more and to register your interest visit www.cpre.org.uk/starcourt

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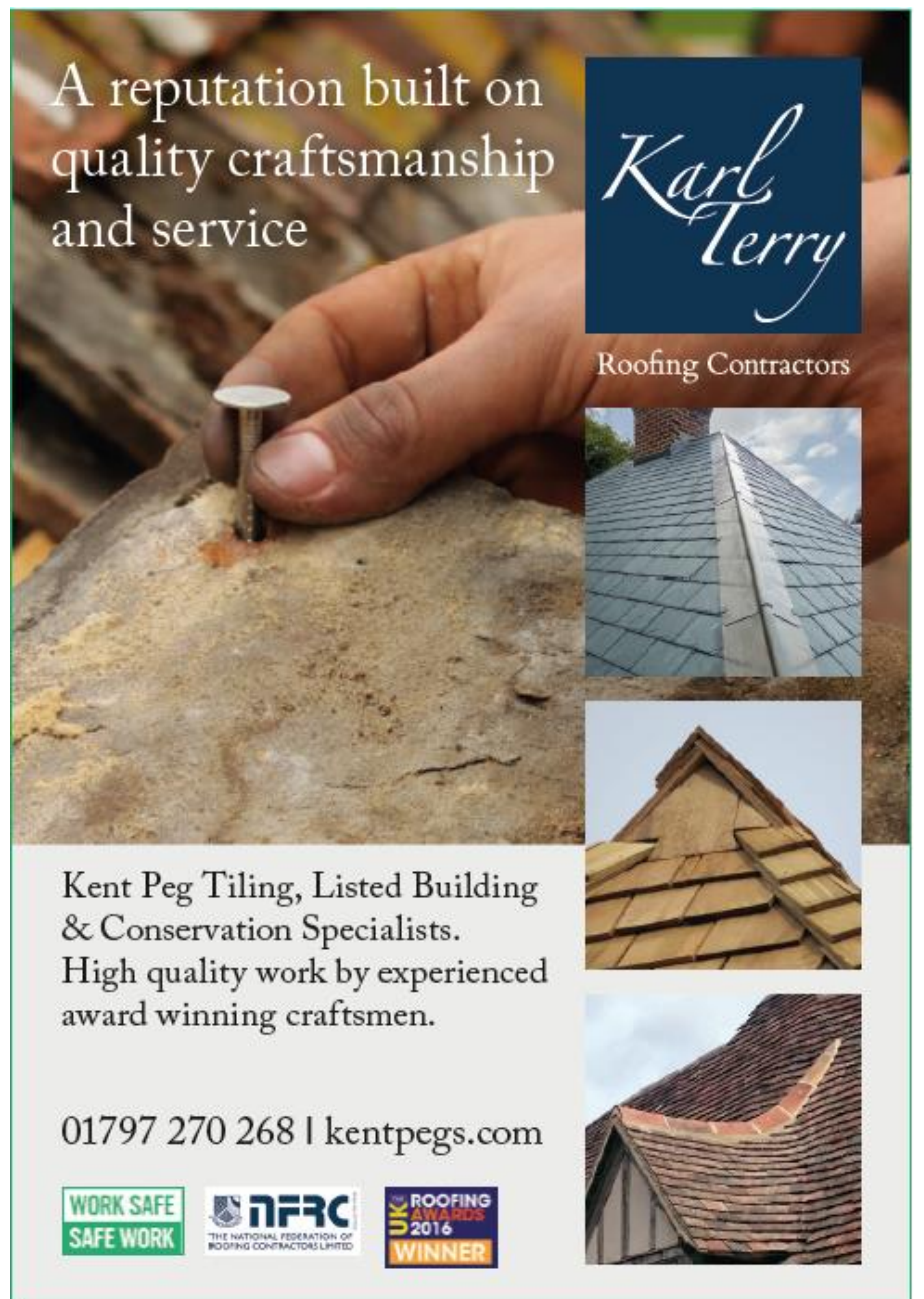
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Wittersham WI

I thought I would give everyone an update on the WI in Wittersham. As you will all know, we are unable to meet at the moment, but we are keeping in touch with one another via email and telephone calls. I am also writing a weekly newsletter to all the members who have an email address and along with an update I also do a weekly poem and quiz.

I have sent a copy of one of the poems I sent out in January about supermarket shopping and thought I would share it with you all. I know some of you were hoping to join our WI at some point and as soon as we are back at meetings I will let everyone know.

If you are interested in the WI and would like any information or would like to have the weekly newsletter along with the poems and quizzes then please email with your details and I will add you to our list. You do not have to be a member to receive this.

(jeanelliott14@aol.com)



Sending you all Best Wishes

Jean Elliott



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Wonky wifi?

*Windows
misbehaving?*

*Snail-like
broadband?*

Network problems?



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A pound in the slot and out comes the chain,
It's Saturday supermarket shopping again,
And so I've obtained my large wire trolley,
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The shelves will be stacked with goodies galore,.
There are loads to be seen from ceiling to floor,
Things that we need and things for a treat,
Food to have cold and food you must heat.

Bright coloured fruit and vegetables are,
Good for your health and keep you up to par,.
Bread, rolls and biscuits, crisps and savoury snacks,
On their own, or in multiple packs.

Cheeses and yogurts, cream, butter and milk,
Some with strong flavours and some smooth as silk,
Sauces and pickles, mustards and dips,
Bacon, eggs, sausages, mushrooms and chips.

What gorgeous thoughts the word 'food' conjures up,
Especially if you're hungry and you wish to sup,.
The aromas and spices, and sweet things and sour,
Shortcrust and flaky pastries, both made with flour.

All kinds of fish dishes like haddock and dab,
Sardine, pilchard, tuna, anchovy and crab,
Squid if you like, it is lovely when fried,
It's really delicious to eat, have you tried?

Salmon, of course, is the best of the lot,
This is a fish you can serve cold or hot,.
With a salad to garnish, the taste is divine,
It's really become a great favourite of mine.

Desserts are mouth watering, they just have to be bought,
From gateaux with chocolate, or a raspberry torte,
Strawberry pavlovas, or nutty meringues.
Each and every one of them will answer your pangs.

Bottles of wine, of red and of white,
Champagne to drink on that one special night,
Maybe a gin, a vodka or sherry,
But with all of this, you can soon become merry.

So reaching the 'cash out' you stand there and check,
On all that you've purchased, it's only a speck,
Of what was on offer, one could buy up the lot,
But most likely you're contented with what you have got.

© Ernestine Northover



Love Quiz

1. Who sang about 'The Love Shack'?
2. What is Nigella Damescena more commonly known as?
3. In which book would you find Oliver Mellors?
4. Who won an Oscar for portraying Elizabeth I in Shakespeare in Love?
5. According to the rhyme, which child is 'Loving and Giving'?
6. Which American singer songwriter was once married to Kurt Cobain?
7. In the Language of Flowers, which flower stands for TRUE love? (it is not a rose)
8. What is Romeo's surname?
9. What do couples do on bridges in Paris to show their love?
10. Which James Bond film features scenes on the Orient Express?
11. Who said 'If music be the food of love – play on'?
12. Who is the Greek goddess of love?

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The Stone Hay Bales

It started with a jolly pumpkin to celebrate Halloween, a cheerfully decorated hay bale which just appeared one day by the bus stop, as if by magic, soon to be joined by the 'masked one'. November saw a poppy for Remembrance. Then, of course, a Christmas Tree came along complete with festive lights. The 'masked one' has stayed throughout and is still here along with a New Year message that we must now 'Hang in there'.

Thank you to the mystery Hay Baler – it has made everyone smile and we can't wait to see what's next.



Sue Lowrie. Stone



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Happy New Gardening Year

2020 was so awful, things can only improve.

On the other hand, everyone being locked down means all our gardens should have had more attention than usual, so should be in fine fettle.

It is usually pretty wet in February but there are jobs to do when possible.

In the Flower Garden

Finish rose and tree pruning.

Deciduous shrubs which flower in winter, like winter honeysuckle and early viburnums, can be pruned when they finish flowering.

Wisteria should be pruned in February too. Cut the long whippy growths back to about three buds. Traditionally, Wisteria is pruned at 2/6 i.e., February and June, but in my experience, just once in February is fine.

Also cut evergreen hedges and mixed field hedges now, before the birds start nesting.

It is fun to try taking root cuttings. Quite a few herbaceous plants can be propagated in this way, for instance Phlox, Oriental Poppies (that is the large flowered ones which flower in May), Verbascum, some primulas and Acanthus.

Scrape the soil back around the plant and cut off some pieces of root nearest to the growing portion. Use only the fattest part, cut them into pieces about 2 inches long, insert into a gritty compost, and cover lightly. These plants differ a lot, so poppies will be quite large cuttings, and phlox and primula, smaller and a lot thinner. Water them and put them in a dry place; water again only when very dry or when shoots start to show. This method gives you fresh plants quite quickly. Don't forget to push the soil back over the roots.

Cut down ornamental grasses at the end of February. You can still sow sweet peas.

In the Vegetable Garden

Time to chit potato tubers, i.e., stand them in a light cool place so the eyes start to sprout. Standing them up in egg boxes is a good way, in a cool greenhouse or on a cool windowsill.

Prepare seed and vegetable beds now.

Some veg can be sown under glass now, for example Chillies, Tomatoes and Peppers.

Get garlic and onions planted.

Net outdoor leafy crops like brassicas to keep the pigeons off them. We do get a lot of pigeons here in Wittersham.

Protect buds on Apricots, Peaches and Nectarines from frost; you can use horticultural fleece or shade netting.

If you haven't already done so, prune your fruit trees and bushes. Do not prune plums in winter, wait until summer, or risk getting silver leaf disease.

Who knows how long we will be restricted to our homes, and, for those of us lucky enough, our gardens, so this is a good time to start big projects in the garden. The DIY shops are open as well as Garden Centres. A lot of firms sell plants online as well, so there is no excuse for not getting stuck in.

Good Gardening
Lex Datta



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The retirement of the Reverend Judy Darkins

Many of you will know by now that the Reverend Judy Darkins has been asked to retire by the Canterbury Diocese, despite her willingness to continue with the Benefice of Wittersham and Ebony until July 2022. At the end of October last year the Parochial Church Councils of Wittersham and Ebony wrote to Bishop Rose, and the Archdeacon of Ashford, the Ven. Darren Miller asking why this decision has been made in the middle of a pandemic, and also highlighting the positive impact the Revd. Judy has made and continues to make in our communities. Some of you may have also read in the national press that the Church of England is in financial dire straits. Both Wittersham and Ebony have always paid the "Parish Share" which is our contribution to the Diocesan finances, and at the same time kept our churches in a good state of repair and contributed to charitable causes.

We have now received a belated response which simply confirms that the Reverend Judy Darkins has to retire this year. We will seek assurances that the Diocese have no plans to sell the Rectory. At Wittersham and Ebony we are in a team of nine parishes, led by the Team Rector, Lindsay Hammond, and the Archdeacon of Ashford, and it will be for them to decide what happens next. There is to be a meeting in early February at which Wittersham and Ebony will be represented where proposals and suggestions will be discussed.

We live in a secular age; most people don't go to church regularly, or perhaps worship elsewhere. However, the church is generally a geographically focal point in any English village and when well run, can represent a central point for the community it serves. The Rector is a reliable starting point if help is needed, and has a duty of care for all the souls of the parish, not just the church going congregation. At Wittersham our Rector has tried to build up the sense of community with Village Teas, Big Breakfasts, the Lunch Club, the Puzzle and Book Library, Toddler Group, and close contact between church and school.

Throughout the pandemic our Rector has been giving daily online support with prayers and reflections, as well as adapting Christmas services to be held outside, socially distanced, and special online Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas services for the school. Wittersham has a strong tradition of church music, with a well-supported four-part choir and bell ringing team. The Rector has enabled various music concerts and events in the church which raise funds for both charity and the church building. Our hope is to have a proactive priest, supported by willing helpers, and that Judy is not to be replaced by someone who just visits on occasional Sundays to take a service, if that were to be suggested.

As soon as we have further information we will keep you informed.

Wittersham PCC: Jean Elliott, Angela Goodwin-Day, Roger Kimber, Terry Kirby, Sue Mash, Jennifer Maynard, Felicitie Sykes. Ebony PCC: Tim Bacon and Jack Gillett.

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A letter from Wittersham Rectory

Dear Friends, a belated happy New Year to you all.

2020 certainly brought a change to our lives as well as a deep sadness at the illness and deaths caused by Covid 19. Our thoughts and prayers are with all who have suffered.

This brings us to a very different Christmas that we celebrated at Church. Not only did we record for you a Carol Service (and all the links to our services are on the website and through YouTube) but we held an outside Carol Service which was very popular. Enormous thanks go to all who attended both our outside services for wearing masks, sanitising hands and complying with social distancing



Our outside crib scene brought many letters to Jesus from children



Wrapping the Church and community with Gods love.

We also had a Christingle with the Christingles separately bagged for safety and we used battery candles to light our socially distanced circle. Two of the highlights of this service were the competition for fathers and children to build a large Christingle and, taking the theme of wrapping a red tape around the orange (the red tape symbolises Christ dying for our salvation and the orange represents the whole world), we wrapped our church round with God's love symbolised by a red ribbon. The children did this so well!

We continued to record all services for Christmas and put the link on YouTube, but we also were able to hold our Midnight at Wittersham and Christmas morning services in both Ebony and Wittersham. What a joy to celebrate our God coming to earth, especially as we cope with all that Covid 19 throws at us.

2021 will bring change again but our blessed Saviour is ever present with us now and in the future. We have started in lockdown and for everyone's safety we have temporarily suspended live services but continue to record a service for you each week.

At Wittersham the church is open on Monday and Wednesday 10 – 12 and 2 – 4 and Saturday 10 – 12 for private prayer and offers a space for quiet contemplation. The library is available at these times for borrowing books or jigsaws. Please put returns in the box provided so we can isolate them for the required time. Please remember to sanitise your hands, wear a mask and sign the track and trace if you are coming to the church at these times.

I continue to offer an e-mail each day with a thought for the day, poem and reflection and details of what our churches are offering. If you would like to be included in this please e-mail me on judyrdarkins@gmail.com. I am definitely retiring on July 31st this year and am very much looking forward to finding out God's next plan for me and my family. There is a meeting on February 3rd with all the churches in the Benefice after which we hope to give you more information on how the churches will go forward following my retirement. Bishop Rose has assured you all of her support and the message of Christmas brings with it God's presence with us, whatever the challenges, as ministry continues in Wittersham and Ebony.

Finally, I want to thank you all for your kind words and extraordinary support during my years here when it has been an absolute delight and privilege to serve you all in these villages.

May God bless you and yours in all you do.

With my love, Judy

From The Vicarage

Wishing you all a Happy New Year.

I am sure that we are all glad to see the back of 2020 and, with the rolling out of the vaccine, hopefully looking forward to a better 2021.

The Parochial Church Councils of Stone and Appledore decided just before Christmas that, in light of the number of cases of the virus locally, to suspend in-person services in church and to move our services online. We now have permission from the Bishop to continue online services up until Palm Sunday. Obviously, if things change and we are able to go back into church for services, we will look at doing so. We realise that it is especially difficult for those who aren't able to access the internet and we do have a printed newsletter and service sheet that is sent out each week. If you don't receive this and would like to or would like the access code for the online services, please let me know. Please also contact me if you need any help or someone to talk to.

In the meantime, please keep safe and well. God Bless. Tricia

Lord God, we entrust to you the families and communities affected by Coronavirus, wherever they may be.

We pray especially for healthcare workers, that you may guide and protect them.

We pray that your Spirit might inspire those continuing to research new medicines and treatments.

And in the midst of this, keep us strong in faith, hope and love.

Grant us the courage and perseverance to be good neighbours.

May the words of your Son Jesus Christ in the Lord's Prayer,

be our prayer as we entrust ourselves and all of us who are affected to your infinite power and love. Amen.

Online services for February

Sunday 7th February Morning Prayer

Sunday 14th February Holy Communion

Ash Wednesday 17th February 7pm Holy Communion (BCP)

Sunday 21st February Morning Prayer

Sunday 28th February Morning Prayer

The Rev'd Tricia Fogden

The Vicarage, Appledore, Ashford. TN26 2DB

01233 758250/07885285636 or patricia.fogden@btinternet.com

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CHRISTMAS POP-UP SHOP

A big thank you to everyone who so generously supported the Pop-Up Shop in the Porch at Stone Church in the run-up to Christmas, whether by organising, donating or purchasing items. During this period of lockdown this was a joint endeavour that had to operate on a socially distanced basis, and this meant that some additional features could not go ahead. Nevertheless, the event raised over £250 to provide much-needed funds during a time when the church has not been able to arrange any services or other activities.

Visitors to the church were able to enjoy the flowers, Christmas trees and crib decorations. The Porch Library and Produce in the Porch will continue in operation, and the church is open every day from 10 am to dusk for visits.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy 2021

Wittersham Open Gardens. 2021

In 2019 over £2.000 was raised for the church of St John the Baptist Wittersham. This was thanks to everyone who contributed to the Open Garden Scheme, either by welcoming people to their gardens or by visiting. This year we are planning to go ahead as we did in 2019, thinking positively that any outdoor activity will be permitted from Easter, and we are looking for participants for this year. All that is required is to choose a date between Easter and the end of September and be willing to welcome people into your garden from 11.00 to 12.00 on a Tuesday morning. Also tea, coffee and cake is always welcome, as is a table with small raffle prizes! The cost for each person will be £3. We hope that as many people as possible will participate- do telephone to either Julia or Jane to book your week!

Julia 01797 270842 or Jane 01797 270075.

Stone-cum-Ebony Memorial Hall

Unfortunately, the Hall remains closed for the foreseeable future due to the current restrictions. Rest assured that the Committee is keeping an eye on it, ready for the wonderful moment when the doors can re-open and events can resume!

Meanwhile, we are still seeking a volunteer for the role of Treasurer. Joe Cantor has done an excellent job for us over the years but now would like to step down from the role. Anybody interested in joining our small Committee to help keep our village hall open (when it can !), please either email stonememorialhall@gmail.com or telephone the Committee Secretary, Marion, on 01233 758113.



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1. The B52s
2. Love-in-a-Mist
3. Lady Chatterley’s Lover
4. Judi Dench
5. Friday's
6. Courtney Love
7. Forget-me-Not
8. Montague
9. Fix Padlocks
10. From Russia with Love
11. William Shakespeare
12. Aphrodite

Final copy for the March Edition
is 15th February
outlookonoxney@yahoo.co.uk

Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who has contributed articles, pictures, stories, and suggestions for this edition.

Finally,
an apology to everyone who finds this edition difficult to read, to those whose contributions have been ruthlessly disfigured, or missed out altogether, and to those who spot the myriad changes of font size, type face, alignment etc.

We did our best, but we can all now appreciate what a great job Sam does. If anyone out there has the right skills to do this properly, please let us know. Chris and Peter are first-timers at this, which is probably very obvious. Hopefully this is better than nothing 😊

Wittersham Parish Council Planning Applications

Wittersham Parish Council Planning Applications Received for Comment. Decision to be made Ashford BC.					
Application No.	Place to which it relates	Summary of the nature of the application	PC Comment	ABC Decision	
19/00740/AS	Redundant Barn at Ewe & Lamb Public House	Conversion and change of use of barn into 1 bedroom dwelling with garden area and parking.	Object	Refused	18/12/20
20/00623/AS	Moat Farm, Moons Green	Demolition of redundant buildings and conversion of traditional barn and Oast buildings to residential dwelling, construction of Garage Block and Stable Block, horse walker & provision for periodic storing of circus lorry and trailer.	Support		
20/00906/AS	Land west of & adjacent Budds House Cottage	Erection of a barn for forestry management (revision of permission 14/00718/AS in College Wood).	Support		
20/01247/AS	Annexe at Dobell Farm	Lawful Development Certificate - Existing - use of the property as an independent residential dwelling	No-one consulted	Existing use	Lawful 17/12/20
20/01495/AS	Lordings Oast	Detached garage & gardener's store (retrospective - revision to planning permission 17/00440/AS)	Support	Granted	09/12/20
20/01498/AS	14 Forge Meads	Two storey rear extension	Support	Granted	07/12/20
20/01552/AS	Cullens Farm Buildings Maytham Road	Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a detached three bedroom dwelling with associated parking and amenity			
21/00043/AS	David's Cottage 3A The Street	Conversion of existing conservatory to Sunroom			
21/00044/AS	Kingsgate Farm	Proposed replacement garage			
21/00023/AS	22 Swan Cottages	Lawful Development Certificate - Proposed - New vehicle crossover to form vehicular access	No-one Consulted		
21/00073/AS	Blackbarn Bungalow	Siting of a mobile home as an ancillary residential annex			
21/00083/AS	Underhill, Rye Road	Proposed Garage			
20/01782/AS	Poplar Farm House	Outline Planning Permission for up to 23 dwellings together with all necessary infrastructure considering accesss only (all other matters reserved.			
		For updated weekly list please see Parish Council Notice Boards	as at	15/01/2021	



Proposal for 30 new properties on Stocks Road, opposite Hillview Garage

A planning application has been submitted but, at the time of going to press, is not yet on the Ashford planning website. Search that website or look on www.wittershampc.org for a link.

The application will include layout, building plans and appearance, environmental and similar considerations. That is the place to look when deciding your views, as they must deal with what are called ‘planning considerations’ if Ashford is to take them into account in their decision.

The Parish Council will decide how to proceed once it sees the application and the deadline. The usual public meeting in the Hall to discuss a larger site is impossible. The council will still meet ‘in public’, but using ‘Zoom’ which is a poor substitute when hoping to hear the public’s views. How we can make the best of this remains to be decided by the council when we know more.

Meanwhile, the best way for everyone to make their views known is to submit them to Ashford, either on the planning website or by post or email. Parish councillors can read all those comments.

The Clerk will write to the neighbours most directly affected by the proposals, they can respond to her and their views will be passed on to councillors. They should send their views to Ashford too if they want them taken into account by the formal decision makers – the Planning Officer who writes the report and the Planning Committee which decided a larger application like this.

Lastly, because of timing, any updates to this news will be put out on Nextdoor.
Jeremy Smith (15th January)

FOTP Community Project

Please support funding a Full Fibre Optic broadband network to benefit everyone in Stone in Oxney using Government vouchers. Use them or lose them! Thanks to the fantastic support of the community, the project had raised well over the target of £294,660 before the voucher value was slashed. £141,000 is all that is left in the pot.

Around 30% of the people in the village don’t get the speeds they want or need. Many people and businesses pay for slow and unstable internet. A new network would benefit everyone.

Email me or phone to express interest, for the Ts and Cs, and for the link to the pledging site.
Anna Knight aknight283@me.com 758307

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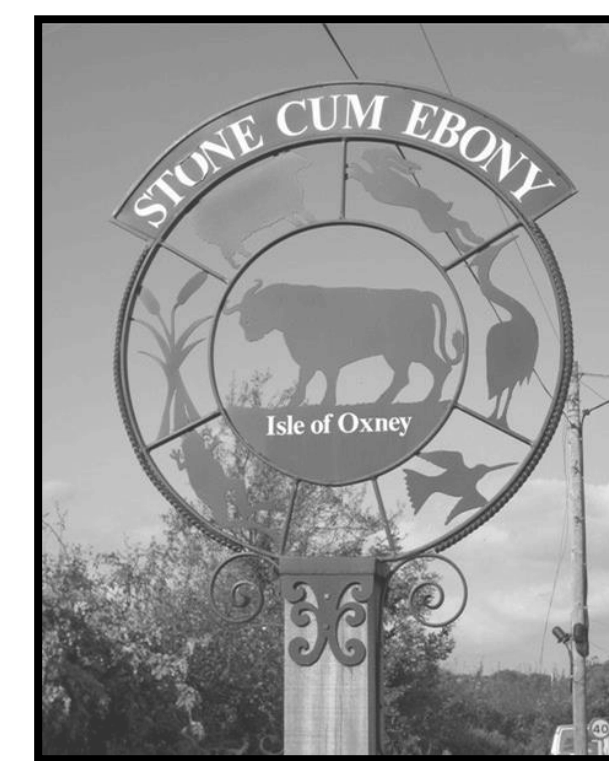
We will have a general meeting once we are able to so we can get your thoughts/feedback, allow people to volunteer for all roles & hopefully vote in a long term committee.

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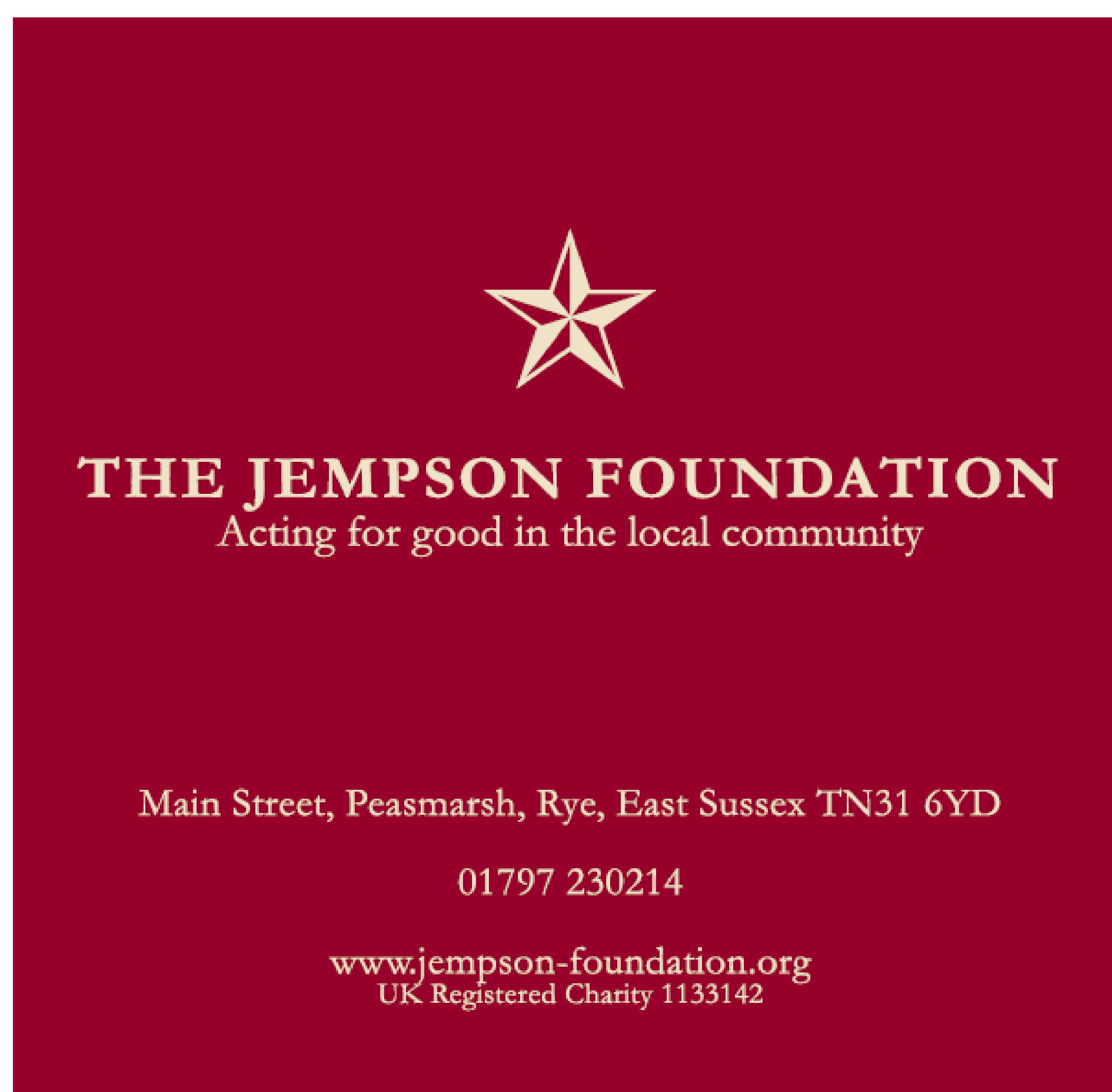
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The Small Print!

All contributions to the website and magazine are subject to Editorial Committee approval.

The Editor reserves the right to amend or, if there is insufficient space (for magazine), to omit articles as necessary.

We are grateful for the considerable amount of voluntary effort that goes into the typing, layout, preparation and delivery of Outlook on Oxney.

The website and magazine is funded by donations from the Parish Councils, subsidised by advertising and other donations.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, we cannot be held responsible for any misinformation, typesetting or errors contained within the magazine.