

Parish News

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF FRANT, ERIDGE & BELLS YEW GREEN



Keeper's Cottage on Abergavenny Estate, circa 1890: Amoret Tanner / Alamy Stock Photo

IN THIS ISSUE ...

3

*Letter from the
Church Wardens*

4

*Church Services,
features & News
from the Pews*

8

*Frant Knitters.
Where do all the
squares go?*

10

*Latest news from
the Parish Council
and our MP, Nus
Ghani*

13

*Donations needed
for the next Eridge
Summer Fair*

14

*What's on in the
Parish: events,
useful contacts
& dates*

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From the Church Wardens



The wise man of the bible, Solomon, said “Go to the ant you sluggard, consider its ways and be wise. It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer, and gathers its food at harvest”. Earlier in the year in our message for Parish News, two ways of life were examined and found to be wanting; the unhealthy ruthless ambition of the rat race, where individuals will do almost anything to look after themselves and achieve their own ambition, and at the other extreme the complacent idleness of the drop out, who claims to despise the rat race, but who actually just can't be bothered. Both of these ways of life destroy community and are meaningless. Perhaps in order to flourish in communities, society should follow the example of other members of the animal kingdom, namely ants, termites and bees, all of which cooperate and work together with no competition. So some facts about ants - They communicate partly through chemicals called pheromones, which help them follow one another to a piece of food. Then, in order to bring it back to their nest, they might spend time chopping it into small pieces to make it easier for individual ants to carry, or work together to carry it whole. The young ants work inside the nest taking care of the queen and her brood, while older workers go outside to gather food and defend the nest against enemies. Ants like to keep a clean house, they carry their waste material outside the nest and dispose of it in a pile called a midden. As well as being their local tip, the midden functions as a cemetery to where the dead are transported in order to protect themselves and their queen from contamination. An injured ant can ask for help by releasing a pheromone which tells other ants to pick it up and carry it. An injured

ant would probably die if it tried to make it back to the colony alone, so if they didn't operate this rescue system the colony size would quickly and significantly reduce in numbers. So we can learn a lot from ants.

If you look on our church web site under 'Parish Profile', you'll find on page 8 onwards a comprehensive description of our communities/ colonies of Frant, Eridge and Bells Yew Green. As we read the glowing description, designed to attract a new Rector, we can understand how at some time, in some way, every part of the community touches or relies on other parts, so every part is important and has to work and cooperate in order to keep the community living, thriving and moving on. It is often the case that if one part isn't functioning as it should, it impacts on the whole community, which will suffer as a result. St Paul in his letter to the Corinthians compares a community to a living body. He says “A body has many parts, the foot might say ‘I am not a hand, so I am not part of the body’. The ear might say ‘I am not an eye, so I am not part of the body’..... if the whole body were an eye, the body would not be able to hear.....But truly, God put the parts of the body where He wanted them, He made a place for each one of them. He did this so that our body would not be divided. He wanted the different parts to care for each other. If one part of the body suffers, then all the other parts suffer with it. If one part is honoured, all the other parts share its honour”. So Solomon, St Paul and the insect world show us how to build and nurture the community in which we live. Perhaps the next time we employ drastic measures to discourage the ant population from coming into our houses, let's remember how much we have in common.



Welcome Revd Brendan Martin
We are delighted to be able to announce the appointment of our new Incumbent for the Parish of Frant with Eridge, Revd Brendan Martin. Here is a message from Brendan which was read out in Church on Easter Sunday:

Dear St. Alban's, Frant and Holy Trinity, Eridge,
Happy Easter! I pray that the festivities of this day enrich your life and worship.
My family and I are thrilled to be able to join your church and communities in Frant, Eridge and Bells Yew Green soon. Having grown up in mid-Sussex and spent many years in East Sussex, we love the area and the people, and look forward to ministry amongst you.
Claire, my wife, and I have three children, Troy (7), Malachi (5) and Annabelle (3) and we have spent the past few years at St. Margaret's Church Angmering, West Sussex. I trained at Oak Hill College in London, having been Youth Minister at two churches just down the road from you at Maresfield and Nutley. Before I entered full time ministry I trained as a Blacksmith in Lindfield. We enjoy walking, growing our own vegetables, as well as spending time with family and friends.
We look forward to joining you soon in our walk with the Lord together.
—Revd Brendan Martin

His current incumbent, Reverend Mark Standen sent his best wishes to the churches at Frant and Eridge on behalf of his church – “we warmly commend Brendan to you as a very fine minister of the gospel”.
Mark subsequently said that he is sure that Brendan will bring many good things to our churches, saying “he’s been one of the best curates I’ve ever had, and combines a gospel heart with humanity and a great sense of fun”.
Crawford Burden, church warden for St Albans says “I would personally like to thank Bishop Richard and Archdeacon Edward Dowler for all their support and counsel during the selection process, encouraging us to pray and keep faith that the Lord will make the right decision.”

News From The Pews
It has been a very sad two months for our church and community. At the end of February David Cragg died after a short illness. David will be remembered for his valuable work and contribution in putting on our concerts and helping in many areas where help was needed both in our church and in Home Farm Court where he and Anne lived for several years. In March Bill Calder died after a very long illness. Bill, a kind, humorous and hospitable Scot, had also worked for many years and in many ways to keep our church running. At the end of the month we were shocked by the sudden death of Adrian Ellis, who with his wife Valerie were faithful members of our congregation for several years. Adrian was well known as a true gentleman who will be very much missed in our church family. Another former village resident, Daphne Cox, died in March. She lived in Warren Ridge for many years and was, among other things an active member of the Pantomime Society and a member of our congregation. Daphne left the village several years ago when she went into a residential Care Home, but is still remembered by many in the village. Another member of the community and resident of Home Farm Court, Jean Alvy, died in February. She was a member of the Friendship Club and enjoyed coming to the Wednesday Coffee mornings whenever she could. Jean was a lady of many parts, who had led an interesting life. Although she was very elderly when she left the village, she

still had a twinkle and a touch of charm.
On a lighter note, thanks to the skills of local tradesmen, David Sunney and Paul Keineder, the Lych-Gate to the churchyard has been restored to its former beauty for us all to enjoy. There now remains the new lighting to be installed. In order to make changes or make additions to the churchyard, we need to obtain a faculty (consent to make changes to church and churchyard) hence the delay. We are still some way from raising the £2.500 needed to complete the work. Thank you very much to everyone who has contributed, if you would still like to help, please put your donation in an envelope marked ‘Lych-Gate appeal’ and put it into the Stables post box (cheques to Frant PCC.) A decent and reliable light will make so much difference to this dark area.
Although we’re still without a Rector, we continue to enjoy some different, interesting and lively services. Two young ladies from Cross Teach in Tunbridge Wells spoke at our Family Service in March. We’ve also had help from Tim Hough from Waldron, Rev Mike Warren and Rev David Houghton from Tunbridge Wells and Rev Rob Dillingham from Crowborough. We are truly grateful to them for giving their time to help us. At the time of writing, we are looking forward to the visit of Bishop Richard Jackson of Lewes, who is coming to take Easter services in Frant and Eridge.

Our Lovely Churchyard
Once again we’re into the grass cutting and gardening season. Last year for the first time due to lack of voluntary help, we paid for part of the churchyard grass to be cut. An appeal was launched and the money was raised. Now we are again appealing for donations to enable us to cover the cost for this year, and we are hugely grateful to those who have already responded, however we are still about £400 short of the cost which is approximately £1,000. We continue to be so grateful to the faithful team who give their time to caring for our churchyard, a few more volunteers willing to be responsible for a small area of the churchyard would solve the problem. It would be sad to see this lovely area of the village once again overtaken by nature, uncared for and unloved.

St Alban's, Frant & Holy Trinity, Eridge

Churchwardens
St Alban's: Jane Emler—532233, Crawford Burden—07789 170275
Holy Trinity: Jonathan Lynn—864304, Christopher Hall—750385



www.frantchurch.org



www.eridgechurch.org

Services for May/June 2019

9:30am	Family Service	5th May	Traditional Communion	8:00am
			Morning Prayer	11:15am
9:30am	Communion	12th May	Communion	11:15am
9:30am	Morning Service	19th May	Morning Prayer	11:15am
11:00am	Church on the Farm	26th May	Joint service at Blackdon Farm, Eridge, TN3 9HX	
9:30am	Family Service	2nd June	Morning Prayer	11:15am
9.30am	Communion	9th June	Communion	11:15am
9:30am	Communion	16th June	Communion	11:15am
9:30am	Morning Service	23rd June	Morning Prayer	11:15am
9:30am	Communion	30th June	Communion	11:15am
There is a Sunday Club for 0-14 year olds at Frant when it isn't a family service—all welcome!				
During the vacancy the order of services may be subject to change Please check the church websites for up-to-date information				


WORSHIP AT BELLS YEW GREEN

Sunday Services: 10.30am
Good Friday service at 10.30am; Bible Study & Prayer: Thursdays, 7.30pm
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Eridge Garden Club

Members were delighted to welcome many new faces to the Spring meeting to meet local asparagus farmer, Stephen Barnes, who gave a fascinating and engaging talk about the annual cycle of growing asparagus, and answered interested members' wide-ranging questions.

We will be hot-footing it to Stephen's farm shop in Groombridge this Spring to sample the different asparagus he has grown.

The Garden Club's next outing will be the Bluebell Walk at Troutbeck. Peter and Maggie Smith's invite us to their beautiful garden at Troutbeck, Eridge, TN3 9JB to see the bluebells in bloom, and, no doubt, the resident peacocks.

The visit will be at 5.30pm on Wednesday, 24th April, (Please note - date is subject to first Bluebells appearing, if they are late it will be moved to early May, email susanna@blackdonfarm.com for more information)

Our bluebell visit will be swiftly followed by a Plant Swap from 10.30am to noon on Saturday, 11th May, at Gilly Goodwin's delightful garden at Hamsell Farm Cottage, Eridge, TN3 9LL.

Bayham Abbey

Why does English Heritage need my support?

Bayham Old Abbey, built from golden local sandstone, includes much of the 13th to 15th-century church, the chapter house, and a picturesque 14th-century gatehouse. Bayham Abbey is now set in grounds designed by famous landscape gardener Humphry Repton, who also planned the grounds of Kenwood House in London.

We are looking for a team of volunteers to help unlock and lock the site each day and help to provide a presentable site. We need the support of local people who are prepared to regularly visit and monitor the site, report issues to us, to keep it in good order.

How much time will I be expected to give?

It will require about 30 min visits in the morning to open up and at the end of the day to lock up as well as checking the monument to help create a great visitor experience. Overall this means a commitment of about 1 hour each day or longer if you wish to spend time talking with the visitors or enjoying the site

alone when locking up or opening up. The site is open: 7 days a week, 1st April – 30th September 10am -5pm.

What support and training will I receive?

As an English Heritage Volunteer you will be supported by a member of staff, the Free Sites Partnership Manager, who you will meet with regularly. You will also receive an induction into the organisation and an introduction to Bayham Old Abbey and the role.

If you are interested in becoming part of the Bayham Old Abbey Team, please contact Ali Naylor, Free Sites Partnership Manager, for an informal chat or for more information. Email: Alison.Naylor@english-heritage.org.uk Mobile: 07876 818542

Frant Parish Friendship Group

At our February meeting Mick Flynn treated us to a very amusing afternoon on Kentish/Sussex Seasonal Customs which included Mick giving a very hearty rendition of various folk songs accompanying himself on the 'squeeze box'. Our ancestors certainly knew how to have a good time!

Also in February the group had a theatre visit to the Trinity Arts in Tunbridge Wells to see an excellent performance of 'The 39 Steps'.

The speaker for our March meeting was Heather Woodward and the topic 'Ightham Mote Upstairs – Downstairs'. As always Heather's talk was exceptional and on a house nearly all members new well, she still amazed us with new information and stories on the house's history. Ightham Mote has undergone extensive renovation over recent years and it has now been discovered that the house is at least a 100 years older than previously thought. We are extremely lucky to have such an historical gem so close to hand.

Our April meeting will be a Fish and Chip Supper and this will be the last meeting until the September meeting on the 26th which will be our AGM. However we are arranging a Summer Outing to Bexhill in June details to be advised.

Bells Yew Green CC Festival

» **Cricketers Close, BYG, Nr T/Wells. TN3 9AL**

Thursday 16th May; 6-9pm
 No equipment or cricket ability required. Fast, fun and free with plenty

of laughs. Want to know more? linda.bowen@sussexcricket.co.uk (07947521836)

Register at: <http://booking.ecb.co.uk/d/56q252>

News from Friends of Bells Yew Green

"Hoorah! We are sure that you'll be pleased to know that the team has now planted the seeds on the bunds, so we are hoping for another glorious display this summer. As it was such a hot one last year, to ensure the seeds grew successfully, we had to water regularly. Thank you to our chief waterer - you know who you are!

By the time you read this we will have had what I hope was the first of a series of magnificent Games Evenings at the Brecknock Arms, with a mixture of games old and new. Hopefully you heard about it and came along! This should be the first of many fun events, spending time with old friends, as well as forging new friendships.

Wealden allocated money to be spent on community clean-ups and Bells Yew Green was awarded a sizeable sum. The team is currently working out the best way to use the funding and we may well team up with Little Bayham to share resources, spending the money wisely on additional equipment. Maybe Frant and Eridge would care to join us?! We have also signed up to Keep Britain Tidy, which automatically entitles us to be known as "litter heroes", apparently! Contact us to see how you can join in the next one, (there is always coffee and cake - bribery and corruption!).

A new Book Club has been started and April's book was Stay With Me, by Ayobami Adebayo. The Club will meet every six weeks to give everyone plenty of time to read each book chosen. Interested in joining? Do contact us for further information about the next book and venue.

Everyone is welcome to join us - these events are for everyone in the Parish and beyond to share with us. If you want to know more about anything, or have ideas you'd like to share, please contact us.

Warm wishes from the Friends of Bells Yew Green. Contact info: Sue — 07944 712000. e-mail — friendsobyg@gmail.com

PS. If you have a computer, please check out bellsyewgreen.org for information about upcoming events.

Frant Knitters: Where do all the squares go?

For many years now, a group of ladies have gathered together in Frant on a regular basis and knitted! They have knitted hundreds and hundreds of colourful squares whilst having a good catch up and a cup of tea. The squares are then handed to a dedicated group of “sewing bees” who have turned them in to no less than 150 shawls.

A longstanding member of the group is Annette Carruthers who instigated the group’s efforts to supply the beautifully knitted shawls to a hospital in Ethiopia which was founded by a friend of Annette’s. The Founder, Catherine Hamlin, recently turned 95 and in her honour, a ferry in Australia (pictured), has been named after her. Here is the story:

In 1946 Catherine Hamlin graduated in medicine at the University of Sydney. She met and married Dr Reginald Hamlin when they were both senior medical officers at Crown Street Women’s Hospital in Sydney. In 1959, Reg and Catherine, with their six-year-old son Richard, accepted a three-year contract with the Ethiopian Government to work as obstetrician-gynaecologists to set up a midwifery school in Addis Ababa.

On the evening of their arrival in Ethiopia, a fellow gynaecologist told them, “The fistula (a serious child birth injury leaving women with physical and lifestyle trauma including ostracism from their own families) patients will break your hearts.” The Hamlins had never seen an obstetric fistula case before and there was little or no treatment available in Ethiopia.

Initially working from the Princess Tsehai Memorial Hospital in Addis Ababa, Catherine and Reg refined the surgical technique to close obstetric fistula injuries, while continuing to treat a broad range of obstetric cases. Within the first three years, Reg and Catherine had operated on 300 fistula patients. As news of a cure spread, many more patients came seeking treatment.

In 1962, the Hamlins built a hostel in the grounds of the Princess Tsehai, using money donated from overseas. The Hamlins then worked for more than a decade to establish a fistula hospital, and in 1974, founded the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital, the only medical centre



in the world at that time dedicated exclusively to obstetric fistula repair.

Dr Reg Hamlin worked at the hospital until he died in 1993. Since then, Catherine’s work for obstetric fistula sufferers in Ethiopia has continued uninterrupted for more than half a century, with more than 45,000 patients treated. Catherine has twice been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and has received numerous international awards and acknowledgements for her dedication and pioneering work. In 2009 she was awarded the ‘alternative Nobel Peace Prize’, the Right Livelihood Award, for her work and in 2012 was given Ethiopian Honorary citizenship.

Catherine was also invited to the USA by Oprah Winfrey to appear on television and talk about the hospital. Oprah Winfrey then visited the hospital and the patients and a new extension has been named after her!

“These women have suffered more than any woman should be called upon to endure. To meet only one is to be profoundly moved and calls forth the utmost compassion that the human heart is capable of feeling.”

—Dr Catherine Hamlin AC

Parish Past

A last excerpt from Frank Sivyer’s memoir - but if anyone would like to borrow it, please get in touch, it’s well worth a read!

“By the way our doctor was a Bachelor of many years distinction. I hold claim to being his first baby brought into this world on his appointment to this village. No hanky panky business with him, also a Dentist. no Gas or Anatchion (unaesthetic?) just sit back and hold tight. One old man of my acquaintance had raving toothache But went to the pub first to get up a bit of courage before the Doctor. On arriving sat on the chair and promptly rolled over on the floor. Alright my man said the Doctor, I can get it better from there, put his head between his knees and out it came. He set all the broken limbs and dispenced all your medicine in front of you in the surgery to take away. I was kicked badly by a horse full in the face, sent flying in the air for yards. I was taken to him in the old Model T Ford in a pretty good mess. I came conscious when he was putting stitches in my mouth, he had already put some in my nose and head. Then bandaged up like a plum pudding leaving a little Hole at the side for my

mouth to be fed by a feeding cup sort of a small tea pot. Then he told me I had been jolly lucky if I had been a little further from the horse it would have killed, being so close was why I got lifted into the air. Go home to bed for two days then come back, he said. This I did, taking the bandages off he said there’s that little bit of proud flesh there (which he took) straight off with scissors and a little bit more here and there. Not so much bandage this time, you can start work now and come back Saturday then I’ll take the stitches out. Start work, I managed to squeak, I’m darned hungry, only Beef Tea. Well, what else, all your teeth knocked loose they will take a few days to get set. He certainly did a good Job, my mouth inside is still a mass of small lumps that got stitched up but nose and forehead slightly noticeable. He walked all his rounds but on rare occasions rode a bicycle. He was still in practice on the birth of my firstborn, but then we had a very efficient District Nurse.” —Pat Wright (*Thank heavens for modern medicine!*)

Young At Heart Exercise Classes

Held In The Stables 1st And 3rd Thursdays of the month at 2.15 pm tea and biscuits provided!

These are going very well with new members joining we will soon have all Senior Frant Residents fit and healthy!!! Do come along and join us open to all.

All enquiries to Gill Barnes 752232
Valerie Palmer 750559

The Arts Society » Ashdown Forest, Crowborough Community Centre, Pine Grove Crowborough TN6 1FE

The following lectures are taking place:

» Thursday 9th May at 2pm Lecturer: Guy Rooker Leonardo da Vinci: The Complete Man of the Renaissance.

Our lecturer, a retired surgeon, shows us how the works of Leonardo da Vinci, painter and draughtsman of the High Renaissance were informed by his study of anatomy and physiology in order to create convincing images of the human form. He reviews Leonardo’s approach to linear perspective, human proportion, emotion, light and shade together with the fashion in which his scientific investigations influenced his art.

Refreshments follow the lecture.
Member free, Guests £6.

» Thursday 13th June at 2pm Lecturer: Claire Walsh The Arts Society Ashdown Forest: The Benin Bronzes: how were they produced and what is their symbolism and ritual use?

Among the most important and valuable works of art from Africa (pictured below), these antique bronze sculptures from the West-African kingdom of Benin astounded critics when they were first seen in Europe in the late 1890s. They could hardly believe that such technically accomplished sculptures were created by African artists, rivalling the very best work of the Italian Renaissance. This lecture reveals the sophisticated production processes, the symbolism and ritual use of the bronzes, and investigates the response of avant-

garde artists of the early 20th century who struggled to place them within their category of ‘the primitive’. Be amazed – and take refreshments afterwards. Members free, Guests £6.

» Thursday 11th July at 2pm Lecturer: Mary Rose Rivett-Carnac The Arts Society Ashdown Forest: Art UK: Uncovering the Nation’s Hidden Paintings.

Since 2007 our lecturer has worked for the acclaimed arts project, Art UK. (www.artuk.org) which was set up to catalogue the UK’s national collection of oil paintings. It involved visiting over 3,000 collection locations across the UK and photographing 212,000 paintings. The lecture offers an insider’s view of this ambitious and unique project. Come along to hear about our rich artistic heritage at our final lecture of our 18/19 season. Members free, Guests £6.



News from Nus Ghani, MP

» Building an economy that works for everyone

A few weeks ago, I had the privilege to meet local businesses at the Hailsham Community College Careers Fair.

It is an event that I've sponsored every year since becoming an MP.

This year, what I saw, in person, was something that I have felt for a long time: that there hasn't been a better time to be growing up in East Sussex.

Recent figures show youth unemployment down, wages rising ahead of inflation, and the number of first-time buyers of home soaring to a 12 year high.

It was truly exciting to learn about all the opportunities for working in Wealden and beyond that are on offer.

It drove home the number of routes young people today can take: from University, to apprenticeships, or directly entering the workforce.

Seeing the number of small businesses, the type that have always been the backbone of our local economy, that were interested in taking on recent school leavers and apprentices shows the confidence those businesses have in our economy.

These opportunities prove that, contrary to some narratives, young people do not have to move away to find work: there are fantastic opportunities on their doorstep.

Being able to keep young people in our communities has such a positive effect, and ensures that our traditions and heritage continue into the next generation. This is something we should all be celebrating.

It also shows the demand for the type of skills our young people have, thanks to the exceptional education that they are receiving at local schools.

Often, I feel that we are far too negative about the next generation.

Not only were the students that I met engaged, bright, articulate, and well-educated, they also have skills at their age that make them an asset to any business.

Their fluency with technology is inspiring, as is their concern for the environment, and responsible business practices.

I'm really excited by everything that the government are doing to support small businesses to take on these young people, and the enormous benefit that'll have right here in Wealden.

Frant Parish Council

Would you like to know what has been happening in the parish council meetings recently? The public are always welcome to attend and the dates, venues and minutes are publicised on the website www.frant.info.

Here are some snippets of information from recent meetings, some good, some bad, that might tempt you to attend or even stand as a councillor!

First the bad- there has been at least one break in, and of course the ram-raid at Lamb's Larder. We are pleased to hear that East Sussex crime commissioners are looking at increasing the numbers of PCSOs in rural areas. Another safety issue we are discussing urgently with ESCC is the state of street lighting at the end of Rushlye Close – we are all agreed that the current lighting provision is quite unacceptable.

Now some good news – through Wealden, the government has provided us with one-off funding of £1200 for equipment to continue our efforts with community organised litter picking in Bells Yew Green and Little Bayham. These work party events will be advertised via the local intranet (LB) and Friends of BYG.

The Council continues to support 'Young at Heart' activity at The Stables for the over 55s, and is now also contributing to the post of youth worker at St Alban's for the benefit of younger folk in the parish.

We are working closely with Friends of Frant Green Spaces, supporting their Lund grant application for replanting, and have commissioned a report from a landscape architect on how best to reduce the damage and further erosion at key points around the green from straying vehicles (and their drivers).

The state of (non) drainage around BYG rail bridge after heavy rain is constantly on our highways agenda – both the sheer volume of water coming down two hills and the collection of debris blocking the new drainage channel are aggravating the problem.

Finally the pros and cons of the Council funding a village defibrillator in Frant is currently being discussed.

Yoga at Hargate Forest

Join experienced, local yoga teacher Sarah Clifford for an hour of Hatha Yoga in the woods, off Broadwater Down. Sundays from 10:00 – 11:00: 5

May, 30 June, 28 July and 18 August. Suitable for all abilities, £12 per person. Booking essential. Details and booking online: <https://woodlandtrusttickets.cloudvenue.co.uk/yogaathargateforest1>

Frant School News

All I can say is that we have had a very busy time at school since you last read our school news. I hope I can do justice to all the lovely things that children have been involved in.

As we finished for our Easter break on Friday 5th April the children had participated in a virtual reality workshop learning all about our solar system, our PTFA had organised an Easter egg hunt in school and on the last day of term we had an Easter service in church followed by an afternoon assembly to showcase the final of our performance poetry competition.

On the sporting front Mrs Douch has been very busy with cricket tournaments, a successful netball tournament held at our school where we came first as well as rugby events and football matches. It is absolutely fantastic to see so many of our children enjoying sport at so many different levels and developing their skill level which will stand them in good stead for when they move to secondary school.

Some of our other highlights include our year six children taking part in an online safety theatre workshop with children from Mark Cross and Mayfield held at Frant. Only the week before the end of term Oak class (years 5 and 6) took part in an Empathy in Action workshop run by Mr Gurney, one of our parents. The children came back absolutely buzzing – they now had a greater understanding of what it must feel like to be a refugee. As one child said – 'it was the best school trip I have ever been on'.

Thanks to our PTFA we held a bedtime stories event in school where some of our dads read to groups of children. We had a very successful World Book Day and a Book Fair week. Our KS1 and reception children also held a fantastic Mother's Day assembly – they sang a song, made cakes for their mums and told them how they felt about them. Our mums went away very happy indeed.

If you have any questions about school life please feel free to call us or pop in for a visit. You are always welcome. Have a lovely Easter with family and friends.

—Mrs Joanna Challis, Head of School

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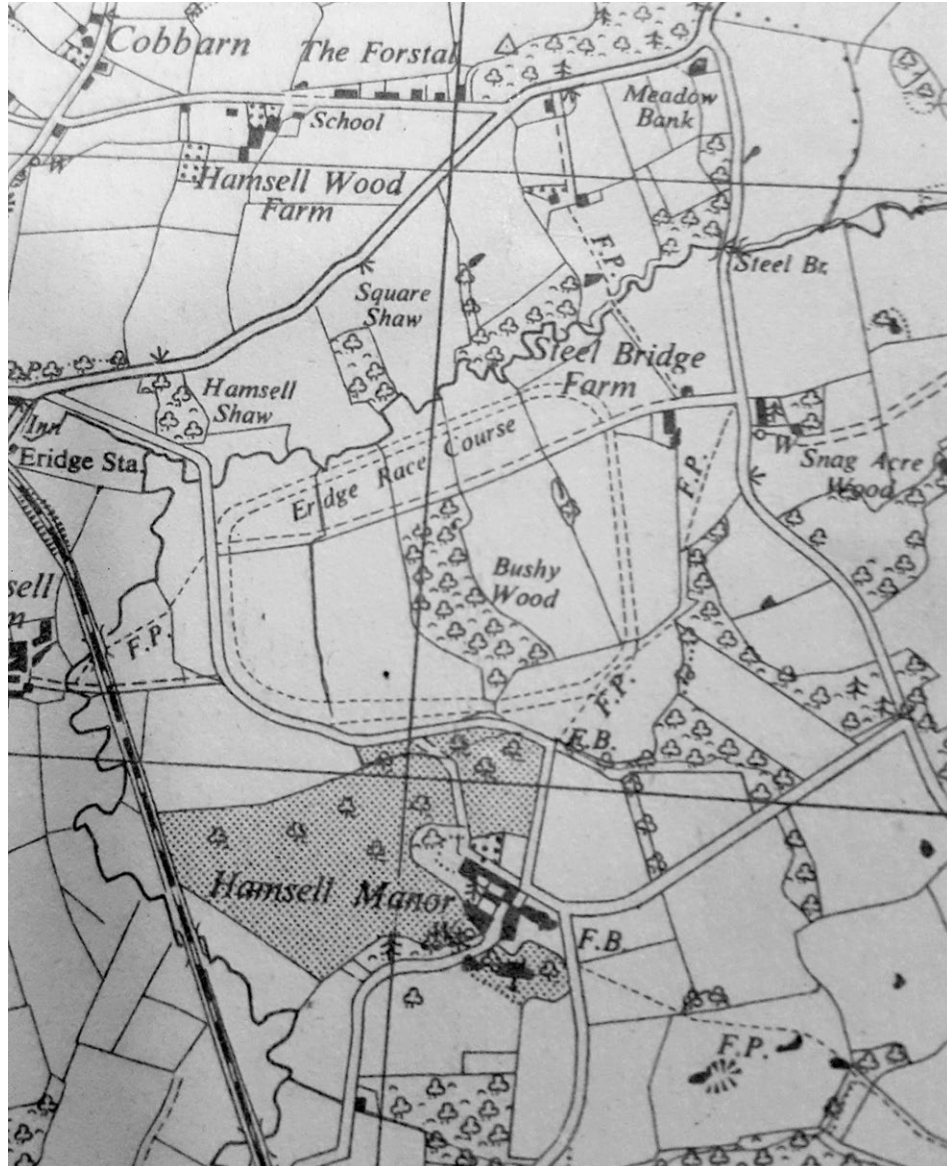
Look back at maps of Eridge for the first half of the 20th century, and you will see marked on them the course followed by the Eridge Steeplechases in their heyday. Some with long memories will recall the thunder and excitement of the horses in full gallop, but for the past 50 years and more it has been only their ghosts which race through the fields of Eridge. Even the track itself has disappeared from sight.

Yet the Steeplechases, held at Steel Bridge Farm, were for many years a highlight of the season. The first meeting took place in 1886, at a time when the local Hunt was still known as the West Kent Woodland. The first stewards of the steeplechase, keen members of the Hunt, included the first Marquess of Abergavenny and three of his sons together with the Masters of the East Sussex and the Southdown Hunts. Initially the event was held under professional rules.

Held on Easter Monday, the event was well attended from the outset. Imagine the scene: couples and families from Tunbridge Wells, Rotherfield or further afield emerging from the steam trains at Eridge railway station in their finery; men in smart suits and hats, ladies in their colourful dresses and best hats, walking the short distance from the station to the starting post where the owners, trainers and jockeys were readying the horses for the off; some spectators climbing onto carts or carriages for a better view, others stepping carefully through the mud kicked up by the horses' hooves to get closer to the action. Everywhere the buzz of excitement and animated conversation.

For that first meeting in 1886 the programme consisted of six races: the Eridge Stakes, the Open Hunters' Steeplechase, the Red Coat Steeplechase, the Yeomanry Cup, the Ladies' Cup and the West Kent Woodland Hunt Cup. The day was judged a success, the races proved profitable for the Hunt, and it was agreed that the steeplechases should become an annual event.

Three years later, in 1889, when the West Kent Woodland became known as the Eridge Hunt, the final event was renamed the Eridge Hunt Cup. This was the year when, just two days before the meeting, the course was under eighteen inches of snow. (By contrast, in 1907 the weather on Easter Monday was as warm



as a day in high summer, and dresses more usually seen at Ascot in June were worn to the Eridge meeting).

In 1909 for the first time the event was held under National Hunt rules.

Only rarely were the steeplechases cancelled: in 1900 because of the Boer War; in 1912 because of the Coal Strike – although an informal meeting was held that year, over a shortened course; and of course during the 1st World War. It was not until 1921 that the steeplechases returned to the calendar – still under National Hunt rules – and continued up to the start of the 2nd World War.

After the end of that War, the course was reopened and for a while racing resumed at Steel Bridge Farm, although in the opposite direction: instead of racing towards Hamsell Manor the horses and riders had to ride steeply uphill from Eridge Station and the hop

gardens. Two laps was the norm, and it was not unusual to see tired horses slowing to a trot as they ascended the hill for the second time.

From 1947 and for some years afterwards the Eridge Hunt Point-to-Point steeplechases were held either at Kemsing or Kipping's Cross (now hidden under the dual carriageway of the A21). Christopher Hall, to whom I'm indebted for the information contained in this article, had his first winner at Kipping's Cross, in April 1961. Later the Hunt moved the races to Heathfield where, being held on Easter Monday, they attracted large and enthusiastic crowds. The Southdown and Eridge Hunt now run their point-to-point races at Godstone in April each year, which continue to be a well-supported and popular event.

—Edmund Waterhouse

Frant Garden Club

Once the weather starts to improve the Garden Club likes to get out and about so on Wednesday, 22nd May, we are heading off to Great Comp Gardens near Sevenoaks looking for ideas and inspiration to bring back to our Frant gardens. There is no meeting in June but on Thursday, 4th July, we shall be boarding the coach for our annual full day outing which this year takes us to Kew Gardens.

Interested? Then please contact Dianna Tennant (Secretary) for details.

Frant Nursery School: New opening hours!

We are now open from 8.30am Monday to Friday and have spaces available for children aged 2 to 5 years old. Frant Nursery is situated in the heart of the village and provides a safe and nurturing environment for young children.

8.30am to 3pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. *subject to child's age and eligibility. 8.30am to 1pm on Thursdays and Fridays.

For further information or to arrange a visit please telephone Shelley Holdsworth (Nursery Administrator) on 01892 890961 or email Frantnurseryschool@yahoo.com

Frant Nursery School News

This term has been a very creative one! Firstly the children made beautiful Mother's Day cards to take home, as well as planting seeds as a special gift for all the Mum's! Then turning our attention to Easter, we were very busy making lovely Easter cards and crafts! We also celebrated Easter early with an Egg Hunt just before the end of Term!

We have been given some toadspawn and have excitedly watched it hatch into little tadpoles. We have also had lots of messy play this term, as well as playdough, sand and water the children have investigated dry porridge oats and shaving foam!!

Unfortunately our playground fence blew down in a February gale, but whilst we wait for it to be fixed we have still been able to have our daily outside play!

We had a wonderful evening at our annual Fundraising Quiz Night, it was a great turn out and we raised a whopping £596.50 for the Nursery School. A massive thank you to everyone who came along and supported us and for our committee who arranged such a



successful evening.

If you would like further information on Frant Nursery School please contact Shelley Holdsworth on 01892 890961. We have spaces available for children aged 2-5 years old.

Kent Chorus Summer Concert

Kent Chorus, conducted by Musical Director, Richard Jenkinson, will be performing their Summer Concert at St. Alban's Church on Sunday, June 23rd at 6.30pm. The programme, entitled 'Music for a Summer Evening', will include Johannes Brahms' beautiful and charming Love Song (Liebeslieder) Waltzes. Put the date in your diaries now!

Frant Pantomime & Dramatic Society

Frant Pantomime & Dramatic Society are proud to present

"It Runs in the Family", a Comedy farce by Ray Cooney. Performances are on 9th, 10th & 11th May at 7.45pm in Frant memorial Hall.

Tickets are £8 are available to buy from Frant Post Office & Stores.

Eridge Summer Fair

» www.eridgefair.org.uk

The Eridge Fair will be back on 30th June 2019 and we need your donations!

If you have any unwanted items in good condition to donate, please contact the relevant people below:

- Books: Edmund & Mary Waterhouse
- Edmund.Waterhouse@gmail.com
- Bottles: Rebecca & Charlotte Hall - rebeccajlendon@hotmail.com

- Boutique: Christine Freeman - cmf@hamsell.co.uk
- Children's Corner: Christina Humberston - miss-de@hotmail.co.uk.
- Horticulture: Jane Stevens - stitchesjane@gmail.com
- Jewellery: Anne Berry - anne@hamsellmanor.co.uk
- Teas & Cakes: Sharon Burvill - sharon.burvill@btopenworld.com
- Tombola: Alison & Ian Holton - holtons@googlemail.com
- Trash & Treasure: Diane & Alistair Smith - diane_e_smith@btinternet.com

We are also looking for volunteers 'on the day' for car parking and stall assembly etc. If you are able to help please contact Mark Parminster: sales@worldpackage.co.uk. THANK YOU

The "Parish News" is published by the Church and distributed free by volunteers. The publisher acknowledges the support of the Parish Council. Any views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily shared by the Publisher. The "Parish News" reserves the right to edit submissions as it sees fit. Editor: Carmel Kinley. Design: Jonathan Christie. Advertising: Susan Piccioni.



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Parish Diary May/June 2019

» **Thursday 9th May & 13th June**
Ashdown Forest Arts Society Lectures
See page 9

» **9th, 10th, 11th May**
» Frant Panto – “It Runs in the Family”
See page 13

» **Thursday 16th May**
Bells Yew Green Cricket Club Festival
Cricketers Close, Bells Yew Green 6-9pm

» **Wednesday 22nd May**
Frant Garden Club Outing
See page 13

» **June – August**
Yoga in Hargate Forest
See page 10

» **1st & 3rd Thursdays each month**
Young at Heart, Exercise classes
The Stables, 2.15pm

» **Saturday 11th June**
Eridge Garden Club Plant Swap
See page 7

» **Saturday 30th June**
Eridge Summer Fair
Eridge Park – see page 13

Regular Meetings

Little Fishes: Baby & Toddler Group
Every Tuesday 10–11.30am in The Stables, Frant. A warm welcome to all.
Ignite (School Years 3–6)
meets each Thursday (term time only).
Encounter (School Years 7–13)
Contact Ed Pascoe for more information:
frantyouth@gmail.com
Coffee Morning at The Stables, Frant
Every Wednesday, 10:30am–12noon.
Come for a hot drink, a cake and a chat.
Sunday Club Open to anyone aged 0-14,
and meets during the 9:30am Sunday
service at Frant (except for the 1st
Sunday of each month when the children
join in with our family service).

Useful contacts

Frant
Frant CofE Primary School
Joanna Challis: 750243
Frant Nursery School
Shelley Holdsworth: 890961
Frant Sunday Club
Ed Pascoe: frantyouth@gmail.com
Frant Bowls Club
David Oliver: 611994
Frant Cricket Club
David Pearson: 750789
Frant Garden Club
Dianna Tennant: 752029
Frant Panto & Drama Society
Alan Richardson: 01892 825378
St Alban's Bell-Ringers
Mary Freestone: 750269
Frant Stables
Julie Pascoe: 07850 091428;
juliedanielle@hotmail.co.uk
Frant Parish Friendship Group
Brian Gill: 750266
Frant Film
Colin Steadman:
colin.h.steadman@gmail.com
Frant and Eridge Church Office
01892 752261;
office@frantanderidgechurches.org.uk
Frant Open Spaces Group
Jan Steadman:
steadman.jan@gmail.com
Frant Memorial Hall
Brian Gill: 750226

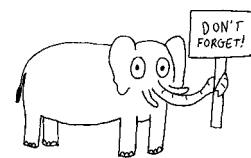
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Eridge Garden Club
Jean Howells: 864310
Eridge Cricket Club
Luke Forbes: 670073
Eridge Village Hall Hire
Booking Secretary: 07470 448425
Eridge Choir
Michael Stevens: 852739

Bells Yew Green
Bells Yew Green Chapel
Ken Davies: 01732 357791
BYG Cricket Club
Andy Brooks: 07876 011782
Short Mat Bowls Club
Pam Mephram: 891426
BYG Village Hall Hire
Chris Bacon: crbacon79@gmail.com
Friends of Bells Yew Green
07944 712000

Council contacts

Chairman
William Rutherford: 752254
Frant Ward
Johanna Howell: 750141
Debbie Park: 319906
Michael Rowland: 526746
William Rutherford: 752254
BYG Ward
Stuart Crookshank: 518631
Andy Macdonald-Brown: 891273
Sue Wallis: 750635
Eridge Ward
Michael Stevens: 852739
Clerk to the Council
Rosie Karim: 653357
frantparishclerk@gmail.com
or www.frant.info
County Councillor
Bob Standley: 783579
District Councillor
Johanna Howell: 750141
William Rutherford: 752254
Parish Council meetings
Full PC meetings are held at 7.30pm
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Planning meetings are held on the first
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