

# Parish News

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF FRANT, ERIDGE & BELLS YEW GREEN



*Eridge Rocks, by SuxxesPhoto*

IN THIS ISSUE ...

3

*Letter from the Rectory by the Reverend Brendan Martin*

4

*Church Services, features & News from the Pews*

8

*RSPB Weald Reseve report from Broadwater Warren*

11

*Sign up to Hospice Run 2024 and support Hospice in the Weald*

12

*The latest Frant Parish Council news*

14

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

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## From the Rectory



So much of life it seems is us doing jobs that are never finished. Gardening is one of those ever-unfinished jobs... I mow the lawn, and then in what seems like no time at all, it needs mowing again – once last month I left it just 10 days and found I could hardly get the lawnmower over it!

Much of life is like that, we have roles and jobs, that need continued care and maintenance. My role as a Father of my children is never finished or completed, my work as rector of the church is never finished or complete. There is always more that will need to be done tomorrow.

One of the things I do miss about when I worked as a blacksmith was that finished job feeling. You might spend weeks on a gate, and then you finally finish it, fix it up, and walk away. Yet most of our life is not like that.

In my life generally, I am not yet the man I want to become. Certainly, my wife is still working on 'helping' me become that man. After 13 years of marriage, it seems there is still much to be done...

I think for most of us as we reflect on our lives we have things we want to work on, things we want to change, things we want to move forward on. Becoming the person I should be and want to be is never completed.

For those of us who seek to be a better person, it requires humility, forgiveness for when we mess up, strength and willingness to change, and a purpose that drives us.

As a Christian my faith is what drives that purpose for me. I want to become more and more who God made me to be. This is a task that is never finished for the Christian. We continue to grow, we continue to mature, we continue to develop through our lives.

My prayer is that we might all have that humility before God, to admit and ask for forgiveness from him when we mess up, and seek his guidance and strength in our lives. At church that is what we do, we encourage one another in our journey of life, to live well, to walk the right path, and be who God wants us to be.

In this life, that work is never complete, but one day God will make all things new, including me. In Church we have been looking at the book of Revelation, which talks about what God is doing now, and in the future. I look forward to the day in Revelation 21:5 when God will make all things new and perfect. When my work is done, and I will truly be who God wants me to be.

—Rev Brendan Martin

**News from the Pews**

It's been a very busy few weeks in church life with a variety of events and services.

In the last edition of this magazine, there was a lengthy tribute to the life of Helen Carpenter who died earlier this year. Helen had lived in Frant for most of her life and was very much a well loved and respected lady in the village and church community. Since her funeral, her ashes have been interred in Frant Churchyard with her husband Gerald. May they rest in peace together.

The wedding season is upon us!

In Eridge, local couple, Eleanor Bellisio and Jake Hyland were married in May. It was a joyous occasion with great community spirit. The beautiful Holy Trinity Church in Eridge made for a wonderful venue on their special day and it was a pleasure to be part of it. The same can be said for the marriage of Hugo Goggin and Armelinda Beqiraj which also took place at Holy Trinity Eridge. The happy couple, from Tunbridge Wells, had the longest family procession ever! A lovely day for all.

St Alban's Church in Frant was delighted to host the wedding of Adewole and Arlette who, whilst from London, have come regularly to worship at our church. It was a joyful wedding with much cheering at the vows. In fact, Rev

Brendan had to quieten them down in order to pronounce them married!

The new Pastoral Care Course has started with a couple of great evenings attended by 12 people from within the Parish and 3 from other churches. Our prayer is that this course might bless us as Christians, but also those around us as we seek to care for them, as well as people from other churches who have joined us.

Our Youth Group, Encounter, has been growing and it is great to have some new children attending. Our hope is that some of the current year 6 children can join us and enjoy seeing friends from primary school after they have moved on to their secondary schools. It's a lovely way to keep in touch and celebrate long term friendships whilst coming together to worship.

It has been wonderful to see nature flourishing at Frant. This year we have seen three birds' nests in action so far with a robin nest and a sparrow nest. The wildflowers are thriving this year in the church yard areas we have left. In particular the first year we left the flowers, we had a handful of wild orchids, which has each year increased to the dozens we see today. The deer were also enjoying the churchyard this week...



# St Alban's, Frant & Holy Trinity, Eridge

**Rector**

The Reverend Brendan Martin — 01892 752003; rectoryfrant@gmail.com



www.frantchurch.org  
**Churchwarden**

Juliet Nightingale—01580 200403  
Kyle Laidler—07775 855866



www.eridgechurch.org  
**Churchwardens**

Jonathan Lynn—07788 597051  
Stephen Barnes—861302

**Services for**

**July / August 2024**

10.30am Frant as One (All Age).....	<b>7th July</b> .....	Communion Service	9.15am
10:30am Communion Service.....	<b>14th July</b> .....	Morning Service	9:15am
5.00pm Festival Church.....			
10:30am Morning Service.....	<b>21st July</b> .....	Communion Service	9:15am
5.00pm Festival Church.....			
10:30am Morning Service.....	<b>28th July</b> .....	Communion Service	9:15am
10.30am Frant as One (All Age).....	<b>4th August</b> .....	Communion Service	9.15am
10.30am Communion Service.....	<b>11th August</b> .....	Morning Service	9.15am
10.30am Morning Service.....	<b>18th August</b> .....	Communion Service	9.15am
10.30am Morning Service.....	<b>25th August</b> .....	Communion Service	9.15am

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Sunday Services: 10.30am & 3.00pm / Bible Study & Prayer: Thursdays, 7.00pm / Enquiries: Peter Arrowsmith, 01892 610309



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**Frant School News**

As we come towards the end of another academic year, it is lovely for me to be able to share school news.

The summer terms are filled with lots of outdoor activities but also, we have had many assessments – phonics screening for year 1s, multiplication tests for our Y4s, KS2 SATS for our year 6 and internal tests for all our other year groups. Well done to all the children for their positive attitudes.

Sport has continued to play an important role here at Frant with many tournaments and events held and planned. Success at so many levels has been a key outcome for our pupils. Thank you to Mrs Douch who always prepares the children to well, encouraging resilience, teamwork, a drive to always give 100% and more alongside a positive attitude at all times. Well done to all our pupils. Please do take a look at our website for more information.

We have been preparing our year 6 children for their transition to their respective secondary schools and welcoming our new reception intake for September. We wish them all well.

We are saying goodbye to a number of staff this term.

Chloe McCarthy left recently to continue her SEND career in early years settings. She is missed by us all but we wish her well.

Sue Anderson is retiring from her role supporting our Breakfast Club. I cannot thank her enough for always being so flexible, supportive and helpful for the children at Frant. As well as running Breakfast Club she has helped with lunchtime supervision and as a Teaching Assistant in class. She will be missed here at school. I am sure she will enjoy spending more time with friends and family.

Louise Montebello leaves to focus on more horticultural activities, leaving behind an established approach to outdoor learning in our Lower School.

Gemma Davey, our year 5 & 6 teacher is taking time out of education to spend more time with family and friends. She has been a central part of our school team and will be missed hugely. She has been our Inclusion Lead and Acting Deputy Head for the last 2 years. Her final production this term will be Oliver which I am sure will be amazing.

Lauren Maidman, our Early Years teacher has been appointed as our



new Teaching Head of School from September. I will continue to be the Headteacher at Frant working alongside Lauren but will be focusing a few days a week on Weald Federation activities.

Amanda Douch is retiring at the end of term 6 much to our dismay. Amanda will be very much missed by staff, parents and pupils. Amanda has been an integral part of Frant School since her children started in reception. She has been a governor, PTFEA active member and our PE Teacher. She has single handedly transformed our PE provision as a result of National Sports Funding. For such a small school, we have taken part in every possible sporting event, we have won at levels schools of our size should get nowhere near. She has cared about all the pupils she has taught and shown them the importance of exercise, keeping healthy, taking part, never giving up and the importance of practice. On behalf of all the pupils, past and present, thank you Amanda. We are sure you will enjoy this spare time you will now have.

I hope you have enjoyed reading our news. Please do contact the school at any time if you have any questions or would just like to say hello. I am in school every day and will always find time for a chat.

—Mrs Joanna Challis, Acting Executive Headteacher

**Frant Pantomime and Dramatic Society**

Frant Pantomime and Dramatic Society aims to perform two shows a year. In early December we alternate between putting on a Pantomime which we recently received two awards for Highly Commended Best Pantomime and Accolade of Pantomime Excellence in the South East Region for 2023

In the Spring we put on either a Comedy or a Murder Mystery with a Fish and Chip Supper which goes down very nicely.

Whilst we are primarily an amateur dramatic society we are also a social group. We have a number of social functions during the year and are a very friendly bunch and always welcoming new members.

If you have ever thought about being in the spotlight or helping backstage or even having a crack with sound and lighting we would love to hear from you.

Please get in touch either by Facebook, Instagram or even going on our website.

» <https://www.frantpanto.co.uk/>  
 » [frantpanto@gmail.com](mailto:frantpanto@gmail.com)

**RSPB Weald Reserves**

Sorry for the long silence since we last issued a newsletter. We thought it was time we brought you up to date on what's been happening recently, now that our busy period of habitat management through the autumn and winter months has ended and we take a step back to allow the wildlife on our reserves to enjoy an undisturbed breeding season. In this newsletter we concentrate on the habitat work that took place over the autumn and winter and we plan to write another as autumn 2024 begins and we can look back on how the wildlife fared this year.

**» Broadwater Warren**

September to March is always a busy time of year on the reserve as we try to fit in a lot of work before the breeding season begins and we stop working on the heaths and in the woodlands so that we reduce disturbance to a minimum.

You will probably have noticed that we had contractors on site with heavy machinery who were felling large trees across the reserve, particularly in the south. Most of the trees they took down were spruce and this was in response to an approach from Forestry England who are trying to establish a barrier in the south to the spread of another invasive species, the spruce bark beetle, that has devastated spruce plantations in Europe and is now threatening to move across the channel into the UK. Although we have no evidence of the beetle on the reserve it is hoped that removing spruce from Broadwater and other sites in the region may stop the spread or at least slow it down. Both the contractors and our own team of staff and volunteers have also continued our programme of coppicing and cutting back trees (mainly birch) from the rides. Coppicing increases the biodiversity of woodland by creating a variety of habitats for different species with the new growth that emerges after coppicing providing food and shelter for a range of animals and plants. The same applies to cutting back the trees from the ride edges, the most obvious result of which is that it allows much more light and warmth to flood in.

A recent edition of the BBC programme *Country File* came from Ashdown Forest and one of the topics covered was overgrazing by deer and the management steps that have had to be taken to reduce deer impact on habitats. We have the same problem at



Broadwater where, in particular, non-native fallow deer that move around in large groups have been removing the scrub layer from beneath trees and grazing coppice stools which prevents re-growth.

The effect of this has been that our efforts to improve biodiversity in the woodland are being thwarted. One species that this has had a major impact on is the dormouse (above). They need scrub to move around and nest in and rely on plants such as bramble for food, both the pollen-rich flowers and the berries. If you look carefully, you'll see that areas of woodland are now lacking almost any scrub layer beneath the trees. We have been monitoring the dormouse population at Broadwater for 14 years and there has been a worrying fall in numbers recorded. We have, therefore begun a programme of deer

management which includes putting up temporary fencing around coppice plots and the culling of deer by a very experienced contractor that has worked with several RSPB reserves. We are now keeping a close eye on the situation to see if these measures allow healthy habitats to begin to develop.

On the heathland the main task has been removing birch saplings which would dominate the heather if left uncontrolled. In the past we would have either burnt the birch or used it to create dead hedges, but now we make birch bundles which you may have seen piled up alongside the tracks. Over the last few years we have sold hundreds of these bundles for river bank strengthening or leaky dam projects in the area. Used along rivers the bundles trap silt and act as protection against bank erosion. Leaky dams slow down run off and improve wetland habitat. Our volunteers make the bundles on a home-made press to specification and the bundles have provided much-needed income for the reserve. But we have also kept some for ourselves and they have been used to create wet/boggy areas on the heath which are already attracting overwintering birds such as woodcock and common snipe and will improve the habitat for other species such as dragonflies.

Did you know that Broadwater is up there as one of the best sites in the UK for damselflies and dragonflies with 28 different species recorded so far? We also now have a share with some other RSPB reserves in a cut and collect mower that fits on a tractor. It's used to mow areas of



heather which helps create a diverse age structure. A healthy heathland includes heather of different height and growth stages. There are insects that feed on newly-emerging heather and birds that need taller, bushier heather to nest in or for protection over the winter months. The latter includes the Dartford warbler (below) which is unusual for a warbler in that it doesn't migrate.

It's a bird of heathland which is distinctive if you catch sight of one with its red eyes, dark plumage and long tail. When we last wrote a newsletter having breeding Dartfords at Broadwater was a hope dependent upon the restored heathland developing sufficiently. We're pleased to say that our work has paid off and from having no breeding Dartfords in 2019 we now have a good population of about 10 pairs. In southern England they are at the very northern edge of their breeding area and are susceptible to being badly affected by cold winters so we can expect our Dartford numbers to go up and down over the years.

Heathlands require a whole suite of management techniques to maintain them, another of which is grazing. Our Konik ponies (Glen, Drina, Mucky and Max) have done a good job of keeping the grass, especially purple moor grass, under control, but they don't eat birch. That's where our goats come in (below left). As they say time flies and it's incredible to think that it's already 2 years since our first goats arrived. We now have a herd of 13 that have been grazing two paddocks in the Northern Heath where they have been eating the re-growth of the birch we have cut



and significantly reduced herbicide use because in previous years we have had to treat each birch stump we cut with herbicide. We are, therefore, moving to the next stage in their employment contract and from this spring you'll see them out on the Eastern Heath apparently free-roaming. But you'll notice that they are wearing collars, and this is because we will be using a no-fence grazing system with a virtual fence created using an app and the goats responding to a signal if they get too close to the "fence line". We'll need to give them some training first of all on the Northern Heath, but if all goes well, it shouldn't be too long before they move to the Eastern Heath which will be divided up into virtual paddocks allowing us to graze the whole heath on a rotation system. This will be the first time the goats will have grazed an area open to the public and it will be so important that

visitors keep their distance and that all dogs are on leads throughout the reserve.

We are really grateful to all the dog owners who walk their dogs on leads on the reserves. Our volunteer wardens do a great job of helping maintain our dogs-on-leads policy and report back on all cases of dogs off leads that they encounter. The great majority of visitors are respecting the policy but there are still incidences of dogs running free at least once a week.

**Eridge Arts Club**

Next Eridge Arts Club event: Wednesday 24 July at 7.30pm in Eridge Village Hall

Artist Louis Ryan will give a talk about the great Spanish artist Diego Velazquez (below), as seen from an artist's point of view. All are welcome. Tickets are £5.

If you are planning to attend please let Mary Helson know: mary.helson@gmail.com.





**The Neville Crest and Gun**

Most of you will know the pub at Eridge Green on the main road, next to the church. I mentioned it in my last article in Parish News which talked about the Eridge gun. We don't know exactly when it became a pub but its name was probably The Gun at first, with 'The Neville Crest' being added at some point after the splendid relief of the Nevill family's crest of a bull was added to the stable or coach-house, probably in the early 19th century.

The building is a lot older than that though. This article is based on a report on the building done in 2010 when an extension of the pub was planned. It looks like a charming 18th century house, but that hides a complicated history. First of all, its position set back from the road suggests that it might have been on the edge of the green, when Eridge Green had such a thing. It was probably taken into the park when the Nevill family returned to Eridge in the 1780s, perhaps when the new cottages along the road were built in about 1825. They replaced the earlier houses around the green.

The pub was built as a house around 1450 to 1500. It was timber-framed. At the north end (towards Tunbridge Wells)

there was the typical medieval service bay for cooking, then a central hall open to the roof and a parlour at the south end where the family could be private, beyond the communal hall where all the household would eat and socialise. The two ends would have rooms above them where people slept. You can still see a carved beam in the pub which marks the dais where the owner and his family would sit, on a raised platform or dais, in the hall.

Sometime around 1500-1550 a fireplace and chimney stack were inserted into the hall. This is on the right as you enter the pub. Before that there would have been a central hearth on the floor. A ceiling would be added to the hall, making more bedroom space upstairs. Around this time the parlour end was made longer. Around 1600 the hall was improved and around 1650-1700 the south end was rebuilt with sandstone blocks, with a chimney added on to the outside which can still be seen. The fireplace is off-centre which shows that this room was once wider. It was also made higher and a gable was made, facing the road, so the house would have looked very different. The cellar may have been inserted under the north end at this time. In the early 1700s

the northern end was rebuilt to be the same height as the south and a rear stair turret was built, as well as a detached wash house or brewhouse – which is still there. The front wall was rebuilt in brick with new windows and an extra door. It was presumably then that the gable was removed. The building now looked simple and unified, as it does today, but the story inside is rather different, as we have seen.

There have been other additions since, of course, up to when the dining room was extended. The building to the right, with the crest, is known as the Coach House, but why was it built? It is early 19th century so dates to when the Abergavenny family was making its mark on Eridge. It has also been referred to as stables. The whole property belonged to the Abergavenny family who also put the letter 'A' on the pub, and heads of Gothic figures, but it is not clear why such a striking emblem should be added to the coach house.

The house was originally the home of a fairly wealthy man, perhaps involved with the iron industry, or a farmer. By the 19th century the census shows that the landlords were farming thirty acres of land surrounding the pub as well as running the inn. So was it always a farm?

The authors of the report on the building mentioned that the cellar suggests that it was a pub, but a cellar would also be useful to a farmer.

Eridge Green is about ten miles from Tonbridge, which is about the distance a horse can go before needing a rest, especially if pulling a vehicle. So, Eridge Green would be a good place to break your journey on the road south, in the days before Tunbridge Wells existed. Did a road-side farm develop a side-line as an inn? However, farm-houses are not usually on the road so maybe the building was always set back, rather than being on the green. The coach house may have been built for travellers, and the crest may just be an exuberant gesture by the Abergavennys.

—Mary Alexander

**Sign up for Hospice Run 2024!**

» Sunday 15th September

**Lower Common Cricket Ground, Tunbridge Wells, 8am-12.30pm**

From experienced athletes to families looking for fun on a Sunday, Hospice Run 2024 has something for everyone. But with only 1000 places available sign up now to avoid missing out on one of the most hotly anticipated closed-road routes in the South East.

This year, there are four routes:

Half marathon: our ultimate challenge! Suitable for experienced athletes, and covering Groombridge, Eridge and Tunbridge Wells.

10k: for regular runners who like a challenge, taking in popular Tunbridge Wells landmarks.

5k: for runners starting off on their fitness journey - why not sign up and start your training today?

Family Fun Run: dig out those hero costumes - our theme is Hospice Heroes! For all ages and abilities, you can opt for 1 or 2 loops of the route and finish up with a medal.

Special guest star and Paralympian Will Bayley will kick us off with words of encouragement on the day followed by a warm up from local fitness trainer Ollie McCarthy and rousing support throughout from our friends at Old School Samba!

All entry fees and fundraising go directly to supporting Hospice in the Weald's care for people facing terminal illness and their loved ones in Kent and East Sussex. Sign up today and we will see you at the start line in September! Visit the events section at [hospiceintheweald.org.uk](http://hospiceintheweald.org.uk) to sign up or call us on 01892 820533.

**Frant Parish Friendship Group**

April was our last meeting before the Summer break and our speaker was our very own Peter Payne and his subject 'The Other Famous Frant Parish People'. This was a fascinating catalogue of the great and the good and the not so good from King John to Johnny Depp who had lived in or visited Frant. It was quite amazing how many celebrities had come to our small part of the world.

We extended our exercise classes into May as these have become so popular. We will be continuing these sessions in the autumn starting on 19th September 2.30 in the Stables. New members always welcome.

Our first afternoon meeting will be on Thursday 26th September when our speaker will be Gilly Halcrow and the subject 'The Shetland Bus'. This is the story of the brave Norwegian sailors, organised by the SOE, in their fishing boats who kept links open between occupied Norway and Britain during WWII,

We are also hoping to have our annual tea party at the George in early September members will be notified of the details in due course.

Enquiries Valerie Palmer – [valeriepalmer1500@gmail.com](mailto:valeriepalmer1500@gmail.com)



**Frant Parish Council**

It was an impressive turnout from our Parish for the Wealden local plan meeting. Over 150 people attended making it one of the most attended of all the Parish meetings in East Sussex. I don't suppose the Plan had much support and interestingly I understand that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council aren't too happy with it either and I quote 'TWBC does not agree with this policy. It strongly objects to the six proposed allocations adjacent to the district boundary with Tunbridge Wells.'

A lot for Wealden planners to now think about!

The Parish Council has begun the process of ordering and will soon be placing a dog bin near Frant Church which will hopefully appease the 40+ children from Frant primary school who wrote to me requesting said bin. Some of the pictures that accompanied the letters were delightful and colourful even if the subject matter might not be! We have also begun the process of repairing/replacing the village gates at Little Bayham and Bells Yew Green. Speaking of Bayham one of our residents clocked speeding top of the range sports cars early one Sunday morning tearing down the Bayham road. Bearing in mind that Bayham has one of the most concentrated populations of fallow deer in the County very high risk thrill seeking I'd have thought! We have reported the matter to the Police.

We have three village halls in our Parish (Eridge pictured below), they all go back many years and some of them were gifts to the Parish from the landowners at the time. They are all managed by volunteers who do a



fantastic job in keeping them going. They are not cheap to maintain especially these days with the costs of electricity and building maintenance etc. I suppose like most things now the adage 'use it or lose it' applies as much to village halls as it does to shops and pubs in the community. The Parish Council does offer some financial support to our village halls but by necessity it has to be done prudently and with the expectation that the village hall is financially viable.

It is to be hoped that the community supports their village halls as much as possible.

—Cllr Stuart Crookshank

**Frant Cricket**

The Green looked an absolute picture as our season got under way on a beautifully sunny Sunday in May against Hitwicket CC, a newly-formed local, wandering side. With the sun beginning to set on this quintessentially English scene, and with plenty from the village coming to watch, we took their final wicket and secured a narrow victory. Max Douch and Duncan Watters were our stars with the bat, and Will Patrick plus father and son, Russell and Lucas Greenwood, with the ball. It was the perfect start to the season.

Under the auspices of captain Rory Williams and club secretary Will Patrick, we have further Sunday afternoon fixtures planned for the summer, mostly against local villages, such as Matfield, Penshurst, Speldhurst, and Eridge. We are a mixed ability side, with several father and son players. We play to win but the emphasis is always on enjoyment. We make sure everyone has a chance to shine with bat or ball or both. So if you fancy a game, please do not hesitate to ring either Rory (mobile: 07802 642085) or Will (mobile: 07884 187871). Newcomers are always welcome. You have nothing to worry about even if it has been a while since you last played!

That cricket continues to be played on Frant Green after 152 years is due in no small measure to the amazing financial support we have received for 24 seasons from our sponsor, Paul Phillips of Sunniva Carpeting Ltd, who are based in the Great Hall, Mount Pleasant Road, Tunbridge Wells (01892 549050). Running a cricket team costs money in terms of maintaining the ground, insurance, and all the other necessary incidentals. Quite simply, we would not have been able to keep going without their sponsorship.

And talking of gratitude, the Club

would also like to say a big thank you to the local businesses and the many in the village who supported the fundraising Race Night at the end of February. Just over 100 people packed the Memorial Hall to enjoy the fun evening and we succeeded in raising £3,053. Special mention goes to JOTA Group, Ensor Interior Design, Knowle Grange, John Pearson Fencing, who each sponsored a race, and to Fullers Farm Shop, Lakedown Brewery and The Secret Cellar for their donations of sausages, beer and wine. The money will largely be spent on much needed internal redecoration and repairs to the pavilion – to supplement its gleaming new roof, following our previously successful fundraising efforts.

The next time you are out in the village and hear the familiar sound of leather on willow, please make your way to the Green. You will be sure of a welcome and will no doubt see some familiar faces. The club is an integral part of the village and we very much appreciate its support. If you time it right and get there at tea-time, you will have the chance of a cup of tea and maybe even a slice of cake!

—Tom Rider (Club Chair)

**Parish Past**

Frank Sivyer again: "The building was split down the middle by sliding doors, boys to the right, girls to the left, a small classroom at the end was the caning and punishment room. You got sent there to get the cane from the cupboard and wait with it in hand for the head's



convenience that sometimes seemed endless. When I was late as I often was (he had a job to do first) it took courage to enter school. Hold your hand out and get two strokes in front of all. We had some comics who after caning would return to their seats shaking all over and making faces of agony only to show his hand to his seat mate and break into a broad grin. The lavatories consisted of a long open drainpipe cut in half this being filled with water. Wooden planks with holes cut in them for seats. I guess every youngster had his legs lifted up and tipped in sometimes by the Bullies.

We had large slates and chalk to draw on, but being a pretty shy nervous character as a child I often knew the answer to a question asked by much too scared to reply. This led me on many occasions to take the cane and get two or three on the backside and sometimes stay in after school for an hour, more punishment than the rest. All scholars were turned out for the midday break in the Street no matter what the weather, while two top boys and two girls stayed behind to sweep up and tidy inside. The dinners at break consisted of bread and jam, cheese or dripping but sometimes one was sent off with a halfpenny to buy a bun at the bakers called Halfpenny Starvers. But the only thing we had in very severe winters which in those days happened often, Hot Cocoa brought from the Parsonage minus sugar." (Just as well the school has changed a little in 120 years!)

—Pat Wright



**Parish Pets #13: Billy**

My name is Billy and I am an Indian Runner drake. I came from Malvern in my eggshell and was destined to be part of an omelette but thankfully someone put me in an incubator instead.

I lived indoors for the first few weeks of life, until the family said I ponged too much and I had to move to the hen house. But if the kitchen door's left open, I'm straight back inside where I think I belong! I have two beautiful Runner wives, and we manage a large garden and a natural pond. I chase mallards and crows; I used to chase cats but one day I got beaten up by a savage feline and had to be glued back together by the Wadhurst vet. The family said it was very expensive glue...

I'm omnivorous (anything from worms to pelargoniums and tomato plants) but I admit to being partial to human hands and legs. If I peck too enthusiastically, people sometimes call me "William the Ruddy Duck". However, the wives and I are much loved and I do enjoy a cuddle!

» Like your pet featured in *Parish News*.? If so, send a description and photo to: [carmel.kinley@gmail.com](mailto:carmel.kinley@gmail.com)

*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. Publisher: Brendan Martin. Editor: Carmel Kinley. Design: Jonathan Christie. Advertising: Susan Piccioni.*



Printed locally by LR  
Online Print Services  
01892 752277  
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[www.lr2k.co.uk](http://www.lr2k.co.uk)  
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**Parish Diary:  
July/August 2024**

» **Wednesday 17 July**  
Frant Garden Club outing to Belmont House, Faversham

**Regular Meetings**

**Little Fishes: Baby & Toddler Group**  
Every Tuesday 9.30–11.30am in The Stables, Frant. A warm welcome to all.  
**Encounter (School Years 6–13)**  
Contact Ed Pascoe for more information: [frant youth@gmail.com](mailto:frant youth@gmail.com)  
**Coffee Morning at The Stables, Frant**  
Every Wednesday, 10:30am–12noon. Come for a hot drink, a cake and a chat.  
**Festival Church Kids** During 5pm outside service.

Parish News can be downloaded from: [www.frantchurch.org](http://www.frantchurch.org) or [www.eridgechurch.org](http://www.eridgechurch.org)  
Advertising enquiries: 750285 or [susan.piccioni@btinternet.com](mailto:susan.piccioni@btinternet.com)  
Contributions for our next issue should be sent to the Editor: [carmel.kinley@gmail.com](mailto:carmel.kinley@gmail.com) or 01892 750217  
Next deadline: 1st August 2024

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07944 712000

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Bob Standley: 783579

**Parish Council meetings**  
Full PC meetings are usually held at 7.30pm every 3rd Wednesday of the month. Please check the Council's website at [www.frant-pc.gov.uk](http://www.frant-pc.gov.uk)

**MP for Wealden**  
Nus Ghani MP:  
[nusrat.ghani.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:nusrat.ghani.mp@parliament.uk)

**Police Contact Details:**  
To report a crime or incident dial 101  
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