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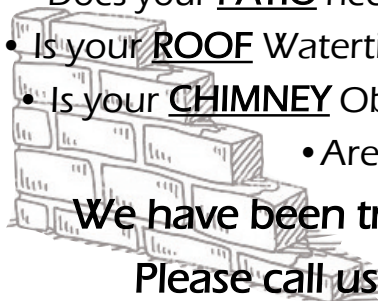
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Useful Information

HASSOCKS PARISH CENTRE Council Office in Adastra Park, Keymer Road - telephone 01273 842714
(answerphone out of hours) Website: www.hassockspc.net. Parish Clerk - Ian Cumberworth
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TONY BARTON 1931 – 2020. I would like to thank everyone for their cards and messages of support following the death of Tony at home on 24th March.

Tony loved living in Hassocks and taking part in village life, especially the Adastra Bowls Club and Keymer Parish Council. He was Captain, Chariman and President of the Bowls club and really valued the many friends he made there.

Tony started life in a Dr Barnardo's home in Kent and was adopted at 2 years old by an elderly couple who lived in Shermanbury. He appreciated having a family of his own. Following our wedding in Poynings in 1953 we had two sons Graham and Neil, daughter Sarah and grandchildren Jack and Natalie.

He was a keen cricketer and played for Henfield, interrupted by National Service in the Royal Army Corps. Following retirement from work in the flooring business and with Keymer Brick and Tile he took up Bowls. We especially enjoyed our Bowls trip to New Zealand for our 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Tony's poor health meant he had to give up Bowls and he particularly valued the support provided by Hassocks Age Concern.

Due to the Corona situation we were only able to have a small family funeral. Thanks again for all the lovely sympathy cards and messages of support which have been a great comfort.

Vera Barton

TONY FAIRHALL The family and myself would like to thank friends and neighbours for their cards and kind thoughts. He lost his fight to Cancer and Alzheimer on 13th March.

He loved Hassocks and always said it was a joy to return too. He lectured at the London Polytechnic for a number of years, and was chairman of the Sussex Branch of the H.I.P.S.

On his retirement, he became a reader for the T.O.T, was a member of the Croquet Club and a very keen stamp collector of the Burgess Hill Philatelic Society.

A huge thank you to Bowleys and Griffith Smith for guiding us through a difficult time. He will be sadly missed by us all. *Mo*



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The laughter and tapping of the feet.
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To celebrate Victory and

live once more in harmony.

Never forget our forces
And all our allies too,
Who fought so hard to battle
To pull our country through.

© Stella Simmons

MID SUSSEX HEATH CARE We have now re-opened all of our sites and in order to keep safe - We will continue to telephone triage all

appointments, and will manage most problems by telephone/video consultations, but where a patient needs to be seen face to face they will be given an appointment time at any of our three sites.

We will continue to triage patients as Hot (Suspected or known Covid, or isolating due to a household contact having Covid symptoms) or Cold (low risk Covid) and give them an appointment in the appropriate zone.

Hurstpierpoint and Ditchling will be entirely Cold sites.

Hassocks Health Centre will be Cold apart from one room which is being adapted as the Hot zone. This has a separate entrance, so the Hassocks site can function as normal whilst maintaining a Hot Zone separate from the rest of the practice.

All of our practices will continue to keep the doors closed, we ask that patients don't come to any of our sites without an appointment.

We won't be booking appointments/taking prescription requests/dealing with queries at the

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Reception desks- we ask that patients ring the phone room to do this.

To keep patients and staff safe - We are minimizing footfall within our practices, maintaining a 2 meter distance where possible, PPE for all staff that need it, clear signage for patients, spacing of appointments to reduce numbers of patients in the waiting room, removal of some chairs to maintain 2m distance in waiting rooms, increased cleaning and removal of all toys/books/magazines from waiting areas.

Covid 19 testing: Is now available to all patients over the age of 5, who have symptoms suggestive of Covid (temperature over 37.8, persistent new cough, loss of taste or smell)

We are unable to test for Covid 19 at the surgery, all tests are organised through <https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test-essential-workers>.

Shielded patients - If you are in this group and have any concerns or need support please contact the practice, we can find ways of managing your conditions minimizing the need for face to face contact and thereby reducing your risk.



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Mr Paul Dixon BSc (Hons) MChS

We can also offer support and signpost you to other services and voluntary organizations.

Further information can be found here www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19.

Chronic disease reviews - are being done remotely unless there is a clinical need for a face to face review, patients who are due a chronic disease review will be contacted by the practice.

Equipment loans - we are currently loaning our oxygen saturation monitors and blood pressure monitors, these are allocated based on clinical need, but if any patient thinks they need one please contact us to discuss further.

Online bookings - We are still unable to open up online booking, this is since we are needing to triage all patients and cannot risk patients coming to the health centre with any Covid symptoms.

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SUSSEX WRITING GROUP LAUNCH LOCKDOWN WRITING COMPETITION

Shakespeare wrote King Lear in locked down London during the bubonic plague. Isaac Newton wrote Principia Mathematica while self-isolating in his second home.

Mary Shelley, housebound and barely out of her teens, wrote Frankenstein in the eerily unsettling atmosphere of 1816, 'the year without a summer'.

Now Sussex based Chalk Circle Writers are inviting writers to send in their short stories, inspired by this time of self-isolation. They could be dystopian nightmares, absurdist humour, or stories to celebrate what you love, have recently discovered, or fear to lose.

Stories can be any length up to a maximum of 2000 words. The shortlist for this inaugural competition by Chalk Circle Writers is being judged by talented Sussex author Vanessa Gebbie and there is small cost per story. The prizes will be £200 for first, £100 for second, and £50 for third places. The best stories will either be published on the Chalk Circle website or in-

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cluded in a forthcoming short story anthology. The deadline for the competition is **31st August**. For further details please visit www.chalkcircle.org.uk/competitions.

Janey Block

reMEMber the local charity for people with ME (Chronic Fatigue Syndrome) has had to cancel all its meetings because of the coronavirus. That includes our annual ME Awareness Conference which was scheduled to take place in Haywards Heath on 16th May. We are now arranging for the conference to take place in the autumn. Apart from the new date (yet to be arranged) full details of the conference, including how to get tickets, can be found on www.remembercfs.org.uk/news/events. You can also find there information about our annual sponsored walk from Clayton Windmills to Ditchling Beacon and back scheduled for Sunday **12th July**. For information about CFS/ME and reMEMber, contact me on **01273 831733**, e-mail me_cfs@hotmail.com.

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THE PLAYERS ARE PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

– we've no crystal ball but being an optimistic crowd we're continuing to update the Theatre since its big makeover last year. Behind the scenes improvements are keeping us busy. And at the moment it really is 'cooler inside' - a temptation theatres always used to use when we had a heatwave!

We've not yet had an opportunity to show you all what an amazing new space we have but we'll take the first opportunity to do so – whether that's with our tentative September production of Richard Harris' comedy "Outside Edge" [we shall all need a laugh or two by then] or if that can't happen, looking even further ahead to our expected Christmas production of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol".

We'll also be looking forward to welcoming back our friends from the Hurst Village Cinema club as and when all of this is possible. And of course, our loyal audiences.

Meanwhile we offer congratulations to Jo at QD Stationery for Talk About and Village Magazines for your unfailing support - wishing you

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ALL THE RIGHT NOTES, Hassocks' own community choir, has been able to continue – in a modified form – during lockdown, thanks to some inventive use of Zoom! After we realised our rehearsals together were on hold for some time, and our June concert almost certainly cancelled, director of music Paul Simpson liaised with various other choir trainers around the country, and devised ways of ensuring we could continue to practise. We still meet every Wednesday evening, at the slightly earlier time of 7.30 pm, and the online practices are now a mixture of singing along to shared videos, and rehearsing our separate lines (suitably muted). About two-thirds of the choir are joining in (and a few others come along for the quizzes that we've also been running), so anyone who fancies trying something different, email alltherightnoteschoir@gmail.com.

And as soon as gatherings are permitted, we'll be back properly! *Paul*

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STAR CINEMA It was disappointing to have to cancel our film nights, but we hope to be able to have the film later this year, you-know-what permitting.

Thank you all for your support over the last few months.

We will get through this; meanwhile stay safe, look after each other, and we hope to see you again asap.

Liz Edmunds

THE CLAYTON & KEYMER BRANCH OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION WOMEN'S SECTION

Apologies to our members that April's coffee morning and also the branch meeting had to be cancelled, this was due to the uncertainty of safety measures being introduced to constrain the Corona Virus; as well as considerable concern for the welfare of our elderly members. We are still unsure what the position will be in coming months.

We have had several interesting speakers this year; one that springs to mind is Chris Wooldridge who is a founder member of 'Child

Help'. Based in Hassocks, with a charity shop run by volunteers, it was set up over 20 years ago to help deprived children. It raises tens of thousands of pounds a year through donations. The Committee members meet monthly to consider applications for help. Regular donations are made to local charitable groups that provide support to the needs of children. Referrals are received from various organisations, agencies, and individuals. Help is awarded on merit, and it could be for anything: from equipment or clothing for a young family who have fallen on hard times, furniture, a fridge or washing machine, or even funds for counselling, or educational needs. Details of donations and funding are posted in the shop window. There are numerous ways you can help: By making cash donations, gifting items for sale, volunteering in the shop or by becoming a member of 'Child Help'.

For further information please contact our Chairman, Jenny Budd on **07719 922326**.

Liz Thomas



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*Cameron Wallis, from South Downs Nurseries at
Villa Adastra in Hassocks*

A Hassocks business donated food luxuries which they could not sell during the current lockdown to local care homes as an Easter treat for staff and residents.

Family-run South Downs Nurseries donated Easter chocolate and delicacies on Good Friday. Not surprisingly, Cameron Wallis from the Brighton Road business received a warm welcome everywhere he went, including at Villa Adastra in Hassocks and Ladymead in Hurstpierpoint.

Many of the items given were from the expansive Sussex Food Hall. A donation was also made to a local food bank.

Sarah Mead

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DOWNLANDS has stayed open throughout lockdown, apart from half term, teachers have been in and out on a rotation to provide cover for our keyworker children.

Teachers and support staff have been working from home to set work for all other pupils, and a large amount of time has been spent grading our Year 11 GCSE pupils.

The pupils have been working hard and produced some really great work.

We are opening for some face to face Year 10 tuition for a limited number of pupils from 15th June, other than that we will continue to all work at home.

Our maintenance and cleaning staff have been onsite daily working hard to keep the site clean and safe.

Some of our admin staff have been operating on a rota to keep reception open for those pupils who are attending school. *Gail Wickens*

UPDATE FROM OLDLAND MILL It has been wonderful to see an increase in the num-

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ber of people walking up the lane to Oldland Mill during lockdown.

Did you know that this year marks the 40th anniversary of the start of the restoration of the Mill? Plans had been made to celebrate this amazing achievement in May. Unfortunately, those celebrations have been put on hold whilst the Mill remains closed to the public.

Some passers-by may have witnessed the Mill in operation. The volunteer milling team have been working hard, in husband and wife pairs, to keep flour production going. An increase in demand has helped to offset the fact that we are currently unable to hold our Open Afternoons and Event Days.

If you see our flour in local shops, please consider buying it to support us. One hundred percent of any profit funds further Mill restoration. We are always looking for more volunteers, please look at our Facebook page or website if you would like to get involved once able to do so. www.oldlandmill.co.uk

Rebecca Street

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HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL - GRANTS TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Hassocks Parish Council has a small budget for grants to assist local community groups or for projects and activities that will benefit local residents.

This year the Council will consider requests for funding at its meeting in September 2020 and all applications must be received by Friday **28th August**.

For further information please contact the Parish Council Office on **01273 842714** or email **info@hassocks-pc.gov.uk**.

Full details of how you can apply can also be found on the Parish Council's website **www.hassocks-pc.gov.uk** *Ian Cumberworth*

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THE HURSTPIERPOINT NSPPC DISTRICT committee recently held a coffee morning at which £271.57 was raised which was a very good result considering the current situation.

Thank you very much to all our supporters who enjoyed some lovely cake and to the committee and helpers.

A big thank you also to the shops who donated raffle prizes and to the Hurst Bowls Club for their lovely venue. *Jo*

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A programme for home-educated children runs alongside the nursery at Westmeston and it also caters for children deferring entry to school. For four weeks in July and August, The Acorns runs a very popular holiday playscheme for 2-11 year olds at Westmeston Parish Hall. Fingers crossed it will run this year! Registration forms are on the website under Holiday Fun. For more details Tel: **01444 455081**
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THE WINDMILLS SCHOOL It is hard to know where to start filling you in on the recent months, a very different picture to the usual busy spring and summer terms filled with outdoor activities and events. But for those readers who do not have a connection with The Windmills here is a snapshot of what has been happening.

As you will know schools were told to close from Monday 23rd March with only a few days notice. Staff at The Windmills had already been preparing for this eventuality and were up and running from 'Day One' with an online learning platform which was available to all children who were able to engage in that. Whilst many parents were juggling working from home with childcare and home schooling, the positive comments we received from many of them confirmed that the learning platform was providing many of the children with a routine and the ability to continue their education from home! During this period the school remained open to the children of key workers and

vulnerable children with members of staff working on a rota basis to support them.

The next phase was then to re-open the school to our Year 6 pupils. This took a huge amount of meticulous planning with the 3 classes being split into 6 with no more than 15 children in each 'pod', whilst still running 3 classes for the key worker and vulnerable children. To ensure social distancing this involved 9 different start and finish times, staggered breaks and different 'zones' for play to be sure the children only mixed with those in their 'pod'!

We were delighted on the first day back that 84% of our Y6 children returned to school showing great confidence in the robust systems and structures that had been put in place. Both parents and children were really positive about the return to school and after just a few days everyone got used to the times and routes for coming in and out of school and to the one-way system in place within the building! Whilst the focus during lessons was on getting the children secondary ready and talking about

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transition the need to think about new ways to make breaktimes interesting gave the children the opportunity to be inventive. With support from their teachers and TAs they came up with a range of games to play that conform to the social distancing rules!

We are so proud of the children for the way they have adapted to these changing circumstances – not forgetting those who continued online learning at home with support from their teachers. We must of course not forget to mention the care and dedication shown by staff at The Windmills during this time - proving just what an amazing team they are! *Sue Bandy*

JULIE ROBERTS AND MICHAEL HINTON

Hi Everyone, We hope you are all well and coping with the restrictions and stress of the privations.

In March we had a very successful gig at The Birch Hotel and I had hoped to be writing to you about the British Heart Foundation concert at Danny House in Hurstpierpoint which was



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due to take place on 29th March.

But the world has changed with corona virus, so I would just like to draw your attention to Julie's website which has a brief report with pictures of the Birch Hotel concert and details of concerts we hope to be able to do. There are also some recordings you might like to listen to.

Thank you all for your support and encouragement. It's being able to share music that makes it all so worthwhile and enjoyable. We hope to be back with more live music in the autumn. The present times must be extremely difficult for millions of people so we don't know what state the country will be in, in the coming weeks and months.

If you haven't seen it you may be interested in an outstanding documentary on jazz legend, Miles Davis, his triumphs and tragedies, which is on BBC i-player.

Do contact us if you have any questions.

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DITCHLING FILM SOCIETY Sadly Ditchling Film Society has had to cancel all our films up to July 2020 as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Hopefully we will return in October 2020 with an exciting and entertaining new programme but, in the meantime, a very big thank you to all our faithful supporters and we send you all good wishes and trust that you keep well and safe until we meet again.

Rowena Cager & Melanie Samuel

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We sang songs and played games
I can't wait....
until we can do it again

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NEWS FROM STONEYWISH Happy Birthday to QD, and the staff there who do such a brilliant job connecting our village communities! And greetings to all readers after such a long break. Looking back, I see that we were open here for just three weeks before closing down again in March, when life underwent such a dramatic transformation. Since then, the Reserve, too, has transformed itself, emerging from the slop of winter's mud in spectacularly exuberant style. Only now is the drought of the past few weeks beginning to bite. Only now are the sweet, sappy leaves of spring learning that being sweet and sappy is rather too much of a good thing for salad-munchers, and arming themselves with bitter tannins and alkaloids to ward attackers off. I have been watching this process in action in the herb garden, where our tender shoots have been nibbled, only to grow back with darker, thicker, more pungent leaves. Latest research into the intelligence of plants is confirming what the indigenous peoples of the world have always believed, that is to say: Plants know more than we think! Not only can they communicate with one another and with the

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teeming life of the soil through threadlike networks of roots and fungal hyphae (a primordial 'internet' which has been humming away for billions of years) – but they can hear and very possibly see above ground too, not with a limited number of organs like us, but with millions of sensors, capable of detecting and responding to sounds, forms and colours! There is a theory that birdsong stimulates plant growth and if this is true it might in some way explain the green vitality of this particular spring. With the white noise of air traffic, road traffic and petrol machinery temporarily silenced, everyone has commented on the beauty of the birdsong. Nature can hear itself! Even the ash trees, which were in such terrible trouble a few months ago, seem to be fighting back. The shock of what has happened to us humans since the arrival of COVID-19, highlights the oft-stated maxim that we are 'not alone'. We too are part and parcel of the interactive and intelligent community of life on earth and the wilderness inside us is busy communicating with its natural neighbours and reinventing and transforming itself, just as the leaves of our lettuces do in the garden. This is

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one very real source of hope. The nature of Nature, given half a chance, is to restore balance and maintain vitality wherever damage occurs and the flow of Life is interrupted. We are an inseparable part of this miracle and the vitality which pumps sap to the top of an oak tree is our natural birthright too, which is one reason why breathing under trees and getting our hands dirty in the soil, as scientists agree, is so good for us. And why one of the more miraculous aspects of 'lock down' has been a national resurgence of interest in growing things and seeking quiet times in green places – reconnecting ourselves

to our *real* life support machine!

The geese, goslings, ducks, ducklings, frogs, newts, woodpeckers, lambs, red kites and other thriving inhabitants of the Reserve, attest to the power of this connection, as do the foxgloves, roses, campions, daisies, and elderflowers, now filling the air with scents of summer. We fervently hope it won't be too long before we can open our gates and welcome visitors again. Meanwhile, here are wafts of fresh air from Ditchling and warmest wishes for health and happiness from all of us at Stoneywish!

Rosemary

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occurred on Sunday 25 August 1861, five miles from Brighton on the south coast of England. At the time it was the worst accident on the British railway system. A train ran into the back of another inside the tunnel, killing 23 and injuring 176 passengers.

Three north-bound trains left Brighton station within a few minutes of one another. At the southern entrance to Clayton Tunnel an automatic signal failed to return to danger after the first train passed, allowing the second train to follow it into the tunnel. The signaller at the south end of the tunnel belatedly waved a red flag in an attempt to stop the second train, but thought that it had not been seen. However the driver of the second train had briefly glimpsed the flag and stopped his train inside the tunnel. The signaller then misinterpreted a 'line clear' telegraph message from the signal box at the north end of the tunnel as referring to the second train instead of the first, and signalled the third train into the tunnel

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The second and third trains then collided in the tunnel with great force. The second train was pushed forward, and the locomotive obliterated the guard's van at the rear before smashing into the last carriage. It then rode up over the carriage roof and smashed its chimney against the tunnel roof before stopping. Many of the 23 deaths were in this last carriage, where passengers were burnt or scalded to death by the broken engine. The bodies of a number of the victims were stored temporarily in the cellar of The Hassocks Hotel.

A nine-day inquest was held at Brighton town hall into the deaths of the 23 victims. It concluded with the jury giving a verdict of manslaughter against Charles Legg, the assistant stationmaster of Brighton station, finding him negligent by starting three trains so close together (against the rules of the company). The jury did not find any negligence by either signalmen Killick or Brown. Legg was committed for trial for manslaughter, but found not guilty.

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CRISIS IN THE COMMUNITY – SUSSEX VALE ROTARY

As with everyone else, Sussex Vale Rotary has had to react to Government restrictions introduced to deal with the Coronavirus crisis. Our meetings are now held via Zoom, but we are still remaining active in the local communities. At the start of the year, we were very pleased to receive a Gold Citation from Rotary International in recognition of our work during 2018-19. We have continued our work locally in a number of different ways.

As you might imagine, the local foodbanks are facing an unprecedented demand for their help and Sussex Vale Rotary has donated £1,000.00 to support the ongoing operation. At the end of April club members were invited to take part in a week of activities to raise a donation for St Peter & St James Hospice, as like many other charities their income has fallen dramatically. The challenge was to spend 26 minutes per day on a sponsored event, for the week 26 April- 2 May. All the effort expended was worthwhile and £500 was raised and donated.

With the schools closed and home education re-

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placing them, keeping children entertained is a challenge, so to help with this, we created 20 Activity Packs which were given to the local foodbanks for distribution. Each pack had a sketch pad, felt pens, coloured pencils, a jigsaw and a book, all aimed at those aged from 9-12 years. In addition, we became aware some families were struggling with getting enough food, so emergency food packages were made up and distributed through the local infant and primary schools in Ditchling, Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint.

In an attempt to lighten the atmosphere caused by the Covid19 crisis, an Easter Bonnet competition was advertised on Facebook and those who wanted to take part were asked to submit photos of their creations. The event was divided into two age groups and we were impressed at the high standard of competition. As judging was so difficult, it was decided to increase the prizes awarded by introducing a 'highly commended' category in addition to the first and second place positions. So, Ivy and Ava came first in their age groups, Felix and

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Elise were runners-up and Jack and Luna were highly commended.

In addition to all this, the ladies from Hassocks WI and Rotary have been very busy sewing scrubs bags for the NHS, with three deliveries taking place in the last 5 weeks and well over 100 bags donated. Like many others, Sussex Vale members have also volunteered as helpers to the NHS and Red Cross.

If you are interested in learning more about Rotary and how you can help, please contact our club secretary on 07546 111996 or secretary@rotary-sxvale.org.uk, he will be



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pleased to hear from you. We can also be found on Facebook and our website is available at www.rotary-sxvale.org.uk.

Duncan Honeyman

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would like to thank everyone who has been helping raise money for a new outdoor forest school classroom, via Co-op membership. We have raised over £400 so far.

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REED WARBLERS AND SEDGE WARBLERS - I BLESS THE RAINS DOWN IN AFRICA

It's amazing how a song can transport you someplace else. I can't hear 'Africa' by American soft-rockers Toto without drifting back 35 years to a school disco in Plymouth. Right now I'm sat by a Sussex reedbed listening to two songs simultaneously pouring from deep in the reeds. These songs also take me back to my childhood and Saturday mornings spent birdwatching beside similar reedbeds in South Devon.

These summer singers are two small brown birds; the Reed Warbler and the Sedge Warbler and their songs make me feel strangely nostalgic for a place I have never been; Ghana, where these warblers will have spent the winter before returning to Sussex each spring. Reed Warblers are rather plain whereas Sedge Warblers sport a streaky back and stripy head with a heavy 'eyebrow' that fixes them with a permanently intense expression. But these identification features aren't important because

you'll rarely see these secretive birds. But, boy, will you hear them! Because when they start singing they just can't stop.

The Reed Warbler's song is a loud, repetitive stuttering chatter of jumbled phrases that just just doesn't just doesn't seem to just just just doesn't just doesn't seem to seem to go anywhere. It sounds like one of those warehouse-sized 1950's computers churning out data. The Sedge Warbler's song is similar but much more energetic and erratic with added harsh 'churrrs' and whistles giving the overall impression that it urgently needs a straight-jacket and heavy medication.

These complex songs have a simple message; 'Hey ladies, my territory is so rich in insects that I don't have to spend much time hunting for my food; I can waste my time just singing'. It's the loudest, longest, craziest song that will seduce a feathered female. Sedge Warblers raise their family in a no-thrills nest low in vegetation but the Reed Warbler weaves an incredible deep hammock lashed together with spider



A. Twine Butcher

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silk between the stiff stems of the tall reeds. The whole cradle will rock as the reeds bow in the breeze.

In August, after raising their families, their warbler thoughts drift back to Africa where drums echo and wild dogs cry out in the night. The warblers will gorge themselves with aphids and, with a fat belly full of fuel, take off from Sussex and head over Iberia, North Africa and the wide Sahara to Ghana; a 3000 mile journey. I always imagine a Ghanaian naturalist pausing momentarily each autumn to observe these returning visitors. Do his thoughts drift to the Sussex riverside where they spent the summer? When the rains return to Africa in the spring they will summon the insect food that will again power their tiny warbler wings back to England to add to my Sussex summer sound-

track.

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STEVE'S BACK PAGE GOSSIP

Hello everyone it's good to be back and I hope you're well and have survived the last few months. I know for some it's been heaven and for others it's been hell. Personally I have to admit I've enjoyed the quiet roads, clear skies, fresh clean air and the abundance of wildlife that has thrived and become a part of our lives all over again. I've been impressed by the way you've embraced our wild bird population and done so much to make sure they've survived in these very strange times. You've also been amazing the way you've stayed local and patronised all the local businesses that were allowed to continue trading - we all thank you very much.

I'm sure most of you will agree that the staff of our local supermarkets Budgens and Sainsburys all deserve a medal for the fantastic work they've done since all this began and have continued to do so - a big thank you to you all. Next door to Budgens I see the Pink Palace is finished and ready to go, I'm not sure why the Barbie Dolls are pinned to the wall, I can only think that you point to the one you like the look of and say I want to look like that. We'll have to wait and see until it eventually opens. What's going on in the shop next door, I haven't got a clue since day one of the lockdown, I don't think one piece of stock has entered the building, the shelves are now so devoid of stock that when you speak you get an echo - such a huge missed opportunity for the owners of Orion News, it's a shame we didn't have ANSH from Keymer down here in their place, he knew what to do and made the most of the situation, well stocked shop and long hours, well done that man.

You do have to feel sorry for our established hairdressers, it's been a long time to stay closed, reopening July perhaps. Russell Thatcher has been keeping his customers up to date with regular news letters on his window - we now call him Rip Van Russell because of his magnificent mop of grey hair with beard to match and as we have always been led to expect from Russell he's done an online course to improve his knowledge of Covid19 and how to implement the new government guidelines for hairdressers, the course was run by the Hair and Beauty Association so now as well as a haircut he'll be able to pluck your eyebrows and wax your legs at the same time - only joking Russell.

Obviously no takers for Ripples old shop but I'm surprised they've been able to leave it in the state it's in and will there be shops under that new development which was the old Post Office?

All that is left is the hairdressers just up from me is also having a complete refit, seems to be the thing to do these days if you can afford it, the newsletter on the window informs us that they can't wait to open their doors again to see this wonderful village thriving again - WOW that must be some kind of refit, but obviously they haven't been around to see the huge queues outside Hassocks Hardware, the Butchers and other small businesses, trust me girls our wonderful village is thriving, still it's going to be great to see you re-open again even if we won't recognise you in your masks and PPE, I'd better go now, keep loving and feeding wildlife, stay safe and alert (love that one) and please wherever you can Stay Local. *Love you loads - Steve*

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