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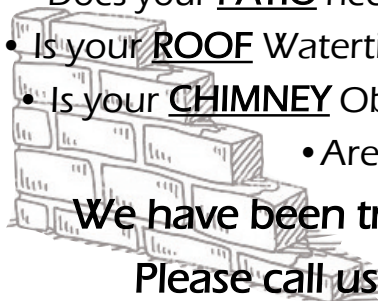
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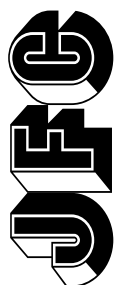
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STATEMENT FROM THE FAMILY OF DAME VERA LYNN The family are deeply saddened to announce the passing of one of Britain's best-loved entertainers at the age of 103.

Dame Vera Lynn who lived in Ditchling, East Sussex, passed away on 18 June 2020, surrounded by her close family.

Further information regarding a memorial service will be announced at a later date.

Donations to the Dame Vera Lynn Charitable Trust Registration - Number 1089657

Obituary - Dame Vera Lynn, CH, DBE, LLD, M.Mus, Hon FGMS forever known as the 'Forces Sweetheart', was one of Britain's best-loved and most enduring entertainers.

Born Vera Margaret Welch on 20 March 1917 in East Ham, London, she began performing publicly at the age of seven, adopting her grandmother's maiden name (Lynn) as her stage name.

Her first radio broadcast was with the Joe Loss Orchestra in 1935 and in the pre-war years of big dance bands, her winning looks, ready smile and pure voice – her natural East

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End vowels toned down with BBC radio pronunciation – put her much in demand.

Having recorded with Joe Loss and fellow band leader Charlie Kunz, among others, she released her first solo record on the Crown (later Decca) label in 1936 “Up the Wooden Hill to Bedfordshire”, and a year later moved to sing with the aristocrat of British dance bands, Bert Ambrose.

But it was her 1939 recording of ‘We’ll Meet Again’, written by Ross Parker and Hughie Charles, which immediately cemented her as the nation’s favourite, that she would become most famous. It was during the Phoney War, between 1939 and April 1940, that the Daily Express asked British servicemen to name their top musical performer and Vera Lynn emerged as “the Forces’ Sweetheart”, a name that would remain throughout her life.

Vera Lynn stepped up her own war effort in 1941 when boosting morale was most needed. She broadcast her own radio programme, Sincerely Yours, in which she sent messages to British troops serving abroad and performed songs most requested by them, accompanied by her own quartet. Broadcast after the news and Mr Churchill’s Sun-

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day address, “Sincerely Yours” became the sound of the resistance for those fighting abroad. She also began visiting hospitals to interview new mothers and send personal messages to their husbands overseas. In 1943 she recorded the second of the songs for which she is best remembered – ‘The White Cliffs of Dover’ – and in the same year appeared in the film ‘We’ll Meet Again’.

As part of the forces’ entertainment service ENSA, Vera Lynn toured Egypt, India and, most notably, Burma at the height of the conflict, giving outdoor concerts for the troops within sound of the gunfire. In March 1944 she went to Shamsheernugger airfield to entertain the troops before the Battle of Kohima, prompting her host and lifelong friend Captain Bernard Holden to commend “her courage and her contribution to morale”. One of the few surviving major entertainers of the war years, in 1985 she received the Burma Star for entertaining British guerrilla units in Japanese-occupied Burma.

After Hitler and Churchill, Vera Lynn became, for generations, the name most readily associated with the Second World War and her songs, including “We’ll Meet Again”, “The White Cliffs of Dover”,



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“A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square” and “There’ll Always Be an England” never lost their appeal. In 2009, at the age of 92, she became the oldest living artist to make it to No. 1 on the British album chart with “We’ll Meet Again: The Very Best of Vera Lynn”.

During the immediate post-war years, she appeared frequently on radio and television in the UK and the United States, featuring regularly on Tallulah Bankhead’s

US radio programme, The Big Show, and recording on both sides of the Atlantic, including in 1952 “Auf Wiederseh’n Sweetheart”, the first single by a British performer to top the US charts where she remained for nine weeks. The same year, she had three singles in the first UK music chart compiled by New Musical Express and in 1954 made it to Number 1 with “My Son, My Son”, which she co-wrote with Gordon Melville Rees.

In 1960 she left Decca Records after nearly 25 years, and joined EMI where she continued to cut Top 10 discs.

Vera Lynn was the subject of the British TV show, “This Is Your Life”, on two occasions and in the late 1960s and early 1970s was a frequent guest on

other variety shows, notably the 1972 Morecambe & Wise Christmas Show. In 1976 she hosted the BBC’s A Jubilee of Music, celebrating the pop hits of the period 1952–1976 to commemorate the start of Queen Elizabeth II’s Silver Jubilee year. For ITV she presented a 1977 TV special to launch her album “Vera Lynn in Nashville”, which included pop songs of the 1960s and country songs.

A close friend and favourite of The Queen Mother, Vera Lynn featured in the Royal Variety Performance on four occasions in 1960, 1975, 1986 and 1990.

Made a Dame of the British Empire in 1975, she lived in Ditchling, East Sussex, from the 1960s where she was an integral part of village life and became actively involved with numerous charities in the area. Notably, and the one of most importance to her, is the Dame Vera Lynn Children’s Charity, based at Cuckfield, West Sussex, which offers an early intervention service for babies and young children with cerebral palsy and other motor learning difficulties. Throughout her life Dame Vera also devoted much time and energy to charities connected to breast cancer and ex-servicemen. She was still held in great affection by veterans of

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the Second World War and in 2000 was named the Briton who best exemplified the spirit of the Twentieth Century. This month Dame Vera has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship from the Guild of Musicians and Singers. Approaching her 100th birthday Dame Vera was honoured once again by being awarded the Order of the Companions of Honour in Her Majesty The Queen's Birthday Honours list in 2016, and further honoured on the 8th May this year, VE Day, with a reminder by Her Majesty of the importance of the words in Dame Vera's song "We'll Meet Again".

Tributes - Dame Vera Lynn was one of the greatest

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ever British popular singers, not just because of her immaculate voice, warm, sincere, instantly recognisable and musically flawless. She will be remembered just as affectionately for her vital work in the Second World War and for her own Charitable Foundations in the 75 years since. A link with more certain times has been irrevocably broken.

(Sir Tim Rice)

Dame Vera Lynn was truly an Icon. She was held in such high esteem and my best, and favourite, memory was sharing a performance with her in front of Buckingham Palace for the VE Day celebrations in 1995. We walked to the stage through

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a crowd of survivors of that war, and they were reaching out to touch and get a smile from Vera. I heard the words..."God bless you... thank you.. we love you" for their very own Forces Sweet-heart! A great singer, a patriotic woman and a genuine Icon. I am happy to use the words called out on the wonderful day. "Vera, thank you, God bless you, and I loved you too" Rest in a very deserved peace. *(Sir Cliff Richard)*

I simply cannot find the words to explain just how much I adored this wonderful lady. Her voice brought comfort to millions in their darkest hours, her songs filled the nations hearts with hope, and her emotive performances, whether home or abroad, then or now, helped to get us through. It was she who chose the sentiments of her songs - she knew instinctively what people needed to hear, how to rally the morale and her spirit & strength created the soundtrack of a generation. There will never be another Dame Vera Lynn. Forces Sweet-heart and our sweetheart. An icon. A legend. An inspiration. My mentor & my friend. I will miss you greatly and I know we'll meet again some sunny day. *(Katherine Jenkins)*

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Dame Vera never lost her reality. The voice like a bell was a gift, which she shared so generously and bravely.

But the magic was that her personality was genuine, open, warm. Meeting her was one of the high points of my life.

She looked at you & SAW you. And connected. There is no one in our lives, except The Queen, who had the power to connect a nation.

For that, she will be remembered & always with love. *(Miriam Margolyes)*

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Dame Vera was an indomitable, distinguished, courageous and superlative artist from a very young age. An icon whose work lifted the hearts and souls of the British people and significantly contributed to Victory in our darkest days.

My father adored the purity of her voice and we still have the tear stained music copy, as he wrote her arrangements he could hear her wonderful soaring tone. Personally, I will never forget the unannounced arrival of her Majesty the Queen at the celebration of Vera's 100th Birthday at the London Palladium; a perfect and fitting tribute.

It was the greatest joy and a privilege to have known her. *(Anthony Andrews)*

Dame Vera has been a dear friend since the early 1970's and for many years a neighbour in the village of Ditchling. The world knows of her great voice that through the good and bad times has thrilled millions. My own father firmly believed that the Second World War was won by Sir Winston Churchill and Vera Lynn. As a friend she was the warmest and kindest of people, I never saw her angry or say a bad word of anyone, people would stop her in the street and she always found time for them. She cared particularly about our armed

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forces, 'her boys' as she called them. Her work for charity, especially young people with cerebral palsy was tireless and inspiring. There will never be anyone like her again. *(Roger Redfarn)*

We have been extremely honoured to have had Dame Vera Lynn as our President and she was always a very passionate and wonderful ambassador for this Charity. Moreover, she has always been hands on, enjoying participating in sessions, singing songs with the children and setting the tone with real determination to ensure that "her families" were never forgotten. She is very fondly regarded by all of the staff and families, and will be greatly missed by so many people. *(Pilar Cloud, Executive Manager of DLVCC)*

The Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity (DVLCC) - Around 1,800 babies are diagnosed with cerebral palsy each year in the UK.

The Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity was set up in 2001 although Dame Vera first became involved with cerebral palsy since the 1950s when she and a group of showbiz friends decided that something needed to be done for babies with cerebral palsy as little was known about it. The original charity was set up 60 years ago. DVLCC offers

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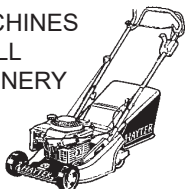
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Until very recently, Dame Vera visited the Charity on a regular basis.

Susan Fleet

*Pictured Dame Vera Lynn
and her daughter Virginia*



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reMEMber the Mid Sussex-based charity for people with ME, has a new Patron, the Countess of Mar, and has important news about the after-effects of coronavirus and a research study into the possible genetic causes of ME.

We were very sorry to lose Sir Nicholas Soames, who had been a patron since 2005, when he left Parliament. We are very grateful to Sir Nicholas for the help he has given reMEMber over the years including taking up our concerns with Ministers and the Chief Medical Officer, and we wish him well for the future.

However we are delighted that the Countess of Mar has agreed to become a patron of our charity. We have known the Countess for many years. She invited us to be one of the founder members of Forward-ME in 2008. She has worked tirelessly on behalf of CFS/ME sufferers and will continue to do so even though she is no longer taking her seat in the House of Lords. Her experience will be invaluable because we anticipate a big increase in CFS/ME type illnesses following Covid-19.

We say this because reports are coming in of previously healthy people who have had coronavirus

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and have not been able to return to their normal levels of health and energy. It seems likely these people are experiencing post viral fatigue (PVF) or post-viral fatigue syndrome (PVFS) – not exactly the same thing as ME/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome but very similar. If this follows the same pattern as CFS/ME, a number of these people are likely to be unwell and unable to work for a very long time. This happened a few years ago following the SARS outbreaks in Canada and Hong Kong.

On a more optimistic note we are delighted to announce that funding of £3.2 million has been granted for a research study into the possible genetic causes of CFS/ME. The study, called DecodeME, will look at saliva samples from 20,000 people who have CFS/ME. The study aims for development of diagnostic tests and targeted treatments. The study is being funded jointly by the Medical Research Council and the National Institute for Health. It is scheduled to begin in September this year and participants will be recruited from March 2021. Anyone with CFS/ME aged 16 or over can register their interest by going to www.decode.me

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reMEMber has been unable to hold any meetings recently because of the lockdown, but we will hold our annual conference in Clair Hall, Haywards Heath on **14th November** provided such meetings are permitted then. For further information about CFS/ME and reMEMber telephone me at **01273 831733**, e-mail me_cfs@hotmail.com or go to our website www.rememberecfs.org.uk. *Janice Kent*

WINDMILLS SCHOOL Last month's we told you that Year 6 children had returned to school; the teachers have been spending a lot of time carefully preparing them for the move on to secondary school. Whilst the children will not be able to celebrate the end of their time with us in the usual ways, they will at least have a bright, colourful Year Book full of memories from their time at The Windmills to take with them! We must thank the FoWS team who worked so hard, with the help of the office staff, to get the year book completed under such difficult circumstances! We do, of course, hope that we can give the children a proper 'farewell' at a later date but in the meantime wish them all the very best for the future.

Our lower school leader, Miss Wright, wanted to

tell you how teachers have been using a fabulous online classroom to set work and communicate with the children who have had to remain at home. The staff worked incredibly hard to set it up and train the pupils to be ready at the beginning of lockdown and it has proved to be a real asset to helping our pupils learn remotely.

Each year group has been following the curriculum as closely as possible to ensure they are best prepared to return to school in September (all being well). It has allowed us to check in with the children to support them and allow their parents to continue working from home. We have had fun daily quizzes, focuses on special events and opportunities for the pupils to share what they are up to. It has also provided a rich online community for our pupils to praise each others' achievements, discuss ideas and problems to lessons as they normally would in a class.

More recently, teachers have added pre-recorded lessons for students to watch at a convenient time for them to see a familiar face and to feel as if they are in the classroom. On top of this, we have begun small group meetings between classes and class teachers to provide children with more social in-

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teraction and to help with mental wellbeing of our pupils.

In such a challenging time, the families, pupils and staff have all worked together to help and support one another which has proved to be a wonderful positive outcome to this difficult time.

Everyone at The Windmills very much hopes that all children will be able to return to school in September. When they do, we look forward to seeing the results of a creative challenge suggested by Mrs Murray! Inspired by Grayson Perry's art club and his recent TV series about the therapeutic benefits of art through the pandemic, the children can produce a piece of art entitled 'A View from my Window'; this can be either a real or imaginative view. All of the artwork will be used to create a display in school as a positive record of their time during lockdown. We look forward to sharing some of their work with you in the Autumn! In the meantime, we wish you all a safe and happy summer.

Sue Bandy

HURSTPIERPOINT GYMNASICS CLUB

Current predictions (1st July) are that sports & leisure facilities will open towards the end of July

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and that schools should be in full swing in September – but nobody knows for sure. We are working towards opening all classes from the **8th September**. We have carried out Risk Assessments and will be working with social distancing, bubbles, cleaning and reduced numbers in our plans.

A few children will now be moving up groups, including all of the Pre-schoolers who are starting Reception in school. It would help if the September Reception children could email us to reserve their choice of Wednesday or Thursday at 4 pm.

If you did not receive an email from us at the start of lock-down, please help us by emailing your child's name to andrewhinhurst@gmail.com (It's a link on our website). That way we can email you as soon as we have positive news.

Please contact us if you are wanting to change groups or are going to leave. All new enquiries are welcome, particularly for Pre-school classes on Friday afternoons.

Andrew Hair (Coach)

SAVE THE DATE Hassocks WI will meet on Monday **30th November** when there will be a talk entitled Knepp Rewilding Project. It's an open meeting for all. More details to follow.



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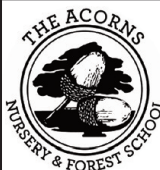
THE ACORNS I feels so good that the wheels are turning again! And on **7th September** The Acorns Nursery and Forest School team will be in top gear, ready to welcome your children to their rural nursery at Westmeston Parish Hall near Ditchling and their home-based nursery in Lindfield. If you are looking for a place in September or January, please get in touch.

With lots of space and time spent playing and learning outdoors, The Acorns offers a brilliant start for your children in a wonderfully safe environment. Our nurseries particularly appeal to parents looking for a smaller nursery with a family feel, and lots of individual care, play, learning and fun. The Acorns welcomes children aged 2-8.

Both nurseries cater for children deferring entry to school and Westmeston welcomes home-educated children too. 'Stay and play' sessions for parents and toddlers will resume asap.

The popular Acorns Holiday Fun! will be running at Westmeston from 27th July.

I am also a teacher who runs The Acorns, offers private tuition to children and adults.



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Janet Irwin

NEWS FROM OLDLAND WINDMILL Whilst the Mill remains closed to the public and the majority of volunteers, plans are in motion for the Mill site to reopen. Initially, this will be for volunteers to undertake urgent maintenance, but we hope to resume our Open Afternoons later this year.

In the last week for June the Mill has three lots of good news from the South Downs National Park Authority. Planning Permission has been granted for the continued use of our Portacabin, along with permission for its replacement with a permanent and more in keeping structure. Lastly, permission has been allowed for the installation of Lightning Protection to the Mill, work on which is soon to start.

A new flour production record was registered at the Mill on 27th June. Volunteer Millers managed to achieve a production of 100kgs an hour, with a total amount of 343kgs produced in the session. Please consider supporting the Mill and our volunteers if you see our flour for sale in the local shops.

Rebecca

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NEWS FROM STONEYWISH This month, a little bit of Stoneywish history. A few years ago I collected together a selection of my QD 'News from Stoneywish' articles and published them as a book. These are the introductory pages and might make light reading for anyone who wants to take a walk outdoors without having to leave their arm-chair!

Stoneywish, Sheep Hag, Little Oxen Weir: the old field names on this Sussex farm bring instantly to mind centuries of habitation by man and beast. Hand toil, back-break, heart-ache and festival. Numb fingers in winter, midday thirst in summer. The seasons have seen innumerable farmers and their animals come and go. The name Sheep Hag has its roots in Anglo Saxon. A Hag is a hedge and the sheep today still take shelter under the black-thorn there. Stonewish presents more of a puzzle. The soil in Ditchling lies in bands, ranging from heavy, blue clay to sandy loam. Stonewish field is full of small flints and pebbles, so that explains where the Stone comes from. But Wish? Another field nearby has the intriguing name of Fool's Wish, so I hazard that 'wish' is maybe a corruption of 'wich' an ancient name for a homestead or farm.

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The boundaries of the farm have shifted back and forth over the years, reflecting the fortunes of those who lived here. In bad times, fields were sold away. In years of plenty they were bought back. East End Farm, as it appears on old maps is a ribbon of meadows running eastwards from Spatham Lane. A timbered farmhouse in East End Lane once faced the rising sun, with space for hayricks in front and a flint-built Sussex barn, set back from the road. But during the 20th century, change threatened to sweep away every vestige of the past. In 1928 the house was sold and re-oriented to face the lane. One by one the meadows which surrounded it disappeared under housing. The farm retreated down its drive as Ditchling filled up with city folk seeking a new life in the country and the village turned its back on its agricultural past. That tractors and cattle would become an encumbrance in the lane was no doubt inevitable once the locals had cars to park there. Who wanted cow-pats on their doorstep and cocks crowing at the crack of dawn? Moreover, the government wasn't sure it had time for small-holdings.

By the 1990s, the future of the farm itself looked doubtful. Of the fifteen dairy herds that once flour-

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ished in this area, not one survives today. Yet Sussex countrymen have a reputation for being stubborn. "Sussex won't be druv!" goes the saying and the farmer at East End Farm had no intention of giving up his land. In the new world of agribusiness, his farm might be a quaint anachronism, but wasn't that just what the public wanted? A taste of old England? Free range nostalgia? Somewhere to relax? Somewhere to take the children? He would reinvent the place as a country park, taking one of the old field names. Stonewish, or Stoneywish, (which was somehow easier to say) seemed to sum things up nicely: half way between a hard place and his own hopeful aspirations. Many is the time he has called it 'Stoneybroke'! And there have been inevitable problems and sacrifices.

Today the village has encroached a little more. The old barn and outbuildings, the farmyard, rickyard and muckheap where the chickens used to scratch are now a tasteful residential development and the only reminders of former times are the weeds and log piles at our own front door. Nonetheless, Stoneywish - the land and all its memories - still survives. The cockerels and cowpats may have been banished but you don't have to look too far

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to find piglets and ponies, turkeys, goats and goslings and all the vibrancy of their contact with the land. Plus ca change...

The abundance of worked flints here bears witness to a further unbroken line of descent, from Stone Age to Stoneywish. Michael finds them as he walks the fields, pockets them and piles them up on the window sills at home – scraps of scrapers, microliths and rough cores which the pigs unearth after rain. And pre-dating these are the Sarsen stones, which occur quite numerous in the region as natural, Ice Age deposits. Village folk once used them to protect the vulnerable corners of buildings from passing traffic. Strike stones, marker stones, greywethers. There were several situated on the farm already and Michael collected more from dumps and local pits, until he had enough to make his own stone circle, facing the downs. These now sit in Stonewish field, adding new resonance to the landscape. In the winter half-light, or the early rising sun, they have a haunting beauty. And the lambs take shelter under them. And the owls perch on them and leave their pellets there for us to find.. They put us in our place. I am a relative newcomer. Over the past twenty years I have painted the farm,



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described it, got filthy, head-to-toe in it, and still I feel I have hardly left a footprint here. Michael, my husband was born here. His whole existence is wrapped up in the place. He doesn't poetize about it because he is too immersed in being part of it, but even he cannot be said to know all there is to know. And you don't have to be born here, or even to live here to belong. In an important sense every visitor can claim to know their *own* Stoneywish. The child who catches her first grasshopper here and the camper who pitches his tent in a gale will have unique memories as valid as any of ours. And simply by hearing about the place, a person joins a growing community whose impressions and affections count. We are all latecomers and our personal Stoneywish is only one of many, but we also see what goes on 'out-of-hours', when the public has gone home, and it is this privilege which inspired me to write my series of 'News' articles for QD's magazines. They have been intended, over the years, for any who maybe cannot experience at first hand the joys of living our particular rural idyll: rising at dawn to break ice on water troughs, sweating in midsummer, pulling thistles and tramp-

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ing across the fields in pyjamas to find a lamb that is bleating in the dark!

Or better still, come and experience it for yourselves. Stoneywish re-opens to the public on **4th July** and we hope those of you who can, will enjoy coming once more. Details of opening times etc. are available on our website: **www.stoneywish.com**. Certain new regulations will be in place to keep all visitors safe and prevent any risk of infection from coronavirus. Campers, please note, prior booking is currently essential. Our new camping guidelines will be found on our website, as will any future changes required by government. Meanwhile, Godspeed, and enjoy the blessings of summer! - to be continued next month.

Rosemary

THANK YOU! I would like to thank everyone who supported me in my mask making over the past few months

I was originally asked to make two for a friend. After 14 weeks and 3000 masks later I have raised an amount of £5,123.00 for Headway, East Sussex.

Judy Tilbury

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DOWNSFEST 2020 UPDATE Sadly, we've had to make the difficult decision to cancel this year's DownsFest music festival. We have held out for as long as possible but feel this is our only option at this stage to keep everyone safe. This has been a hard decision and made with a heavy heart. Although things are changing on a daily basis this is really the least lead in time required to get the event organised in time for September and the government guidelines are not clear enough to proceed at this time.

However, on a very positive note, we are looking at **17th July 2021** for DownsFest 2021. We have brought the date forward into July for the warmer weather and lighter evenings, avoiding other local event clashes and before the schools close for their summer holidays.

We can already confirm that One Step Beyond will be headlining and our new Family Zone will be launched. We will continue to fundraise for St Peter and St James Hospice.

All tickets for DownsFest 2020 will automatically be transferred to 2021. If you cannot join us next year, then refunds will be available through Ticket Tailor, but we are really hoping that most of you

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will be able to support us through these tough times. We cannot thank you enough for your understanding and ongoing support. For further information about DownsFest please follow us on Facebook, Instagram and our website **www.downsfest.co.uk** *Michelle Binks*

DAME VERA LYNN Despite knowing that Dame Vera was 103 years old we were all so shocked to hear the very sad news of her passing. I can honestly say that every show in our 41 years included at least one, often more, of her famous songs in the programme and in the war time anniversary shows such as V.E. DAY, D.DAY, V.J. DAY etc, etc, our special red, white and blue shows would have a programme full of her lively and romantic songs - our audiences just loved them with always an emotional 'We'll meet again' to end the show. Dame Vera's name and her lovely music will always bring back such happy and unforgettable memories for lots of people - she will be sadly missed. We send our sincere sympathy to her family. I write on behalf of our Friends and Neighbours members and I know, our audiences too. *Dorrie*

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HASSOCKS AND KEYMER VOLUNTEERS

COVID-19 Back in March when we first heard about Covid-19 a few of us from the village got our heads together (virtually) to think about how we could help our vulnerable residents self-isolating or shielding at home.

We asked ourselves how we could support them with food shopping and prescriptions and that's how Hassocks & Keymer Volunteer Group Covid-19 was born.

We have a strong team of core volunteers, drawing on their vast expertise in everything from data protection to county council knowledge to help and support those in need. Hundreds more of you have offered your help and we've been able to call upon many of you over the last months to help with everything from shopping, delivering prescriptions to gardening and even painting white line markers outside Hassocks Infants School!

We set up a Facebook group, which grew so quickly that we now have over 900 members. For those who don't use the internet we printed out two rounds of a leaflet about how we could help. Many of you kindly gave up time to pound the streets delivering the leaflet to over 4,000 homes.

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Our Helpline, 01273 040111, provided free of charge by xoomtalk, has been called by nearly 1,000 local residents requesting food or prescription deliveries or help with anything else.

From the beginning Budgens helped us set up a system which allowed us to offer free delivery of groceries to more than 300 people shielding or self-isolating at home.

Working with Boots and Day Lewis we've delivered over 300 prescriptions thanks to our ever smiling team.

Mid Sussex Round Table provided us with emergency funds to help with our project and My Complete Print insisted on printing our gorgeous volunteer T-shirts and the second round of leaflets for free.

With lockdown we are looking to wind down our services during August and are now talking to all concerned about how we can ensure a smooth transition so that everybody feels supported as restrictions continue to relax and we refer people to services that are opening again.

We are truly humbled by the fantastic response shown during this crisis and heartened by how strong a community we have shown ourselves to

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be. To each and every one of our volunteers and supporters a huge thank you. We could not have done it without you.

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THE PHOTOGRAPH OF SERGEANT MAJOR

SIMMONS sent to you by Dave Evans and printed in the July edition was of particular interest to me. My father was Hurstpierpoint postman from 1911 to 1914, and was also a member of the Territorial Army. He told me about those long ago days, and of parades and marches. He also spoke of a Captain Weeks, who was perhaps the Company Commander? My father and his friends would entertain themselves in their off duty times. He enlisted in the Royal Sussex Regiment as a signaller in 1914. There must be many photographs of what we would now call 'Dads Army' that are stored away? Treasures yet to be found.

Peter Pavey

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Can anyone help me? I have been contacted by a gentleman in another part of the

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country who would like to know about a family with the surname Jupp who, he believes, ran a shop called South-down Stores in Hurstpierpoint High Street until about sixty years ago. The head of the household was called George Jupp. He and his wife had several children and my caller believes that in the 1890s they also adopted a girl called Amelia Parris whose mother had been widowed and couldn't afford to keep her. Apparently such unofficial adoptions were not unusual in the nineteenth century. The girl retained the name of Parris, and when she grew up she married and moved away from the area. My caller believes she was a distant relative of his. I would be most grateful for any information anyone can give me about this family and their business. Telephone me on **01273 832280** or e-mail **w.kent123@btinternet.com**.

Turning to the present day, because of the Coronavirus our Society has had no meetings since February. However I am hoping that we will be able to start our programme once again in September this year. We usually meet on the last Friday of each month at 8 pm in the Guides' HQ, Trinity Road Car Park. At each meeting we have a presentation by an expert speaker on a subject with a historical or geographical flavour. I will contact all our members with further news later in August and arrange suitable publicity.

Bill Kent (Chairman)



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THE CLAYTON TUNNEL RAIL CRASH The reprint of an article about the fatal accident on 25th August 1861 with in the Southern entrance of the tunnel in Pyecombe led me to look at the overall total situation some century and a half ago from a wider point of view.

The coming of the railways transformed the way of life throughout the country. Our tunnel took three years to build (1838 – 1841) by more than 6000 navvies using nearly 1000 horses and 5 locomotives. There were no bulldozers in those days – simply wheelbarrows, picks and shovels, blood, sweat and tears. Skips full of workmen were lowered into then 'air shafts' (one 270' deep) on ropes by horses who later hoisted out debris, water – and all being well – the men themselves. Where did the families live and where were their horses stables?

The Victorian façade of the Northern portal, at the junction of the A273 and the B2112 reveals a very different aspect. A bridge near the Jack and Jill Inn allows everybody to see height speed trains running through the elaborate yawning entrance, giving the appearance of a castle fallen out of a story book. In fact it is a Grade II listed folly, built to

appease the farmer who owned the land. The brick built and off centre lodge was added in 1849 for the use of the signalman whose job it was to re-light the gas lamps extinguished by the passing, originally six daily, steam trains. Presently more than three hundred pass under the feet of the occupants every day. They see them yet otherwise do not hear or feel vibrations from them!

There is perhaps a link to Charles Dickens who was involved in a similar incident in Staplehurst, Kent four years later (9th June 1865) With our crash still in mind he was spurred to write a tale of a ghostly apparition witnessed by a signalman near a tunnel entrance. It is called, simply, The Signalman and it is they who were involved in our crash. There is much more to this story and its repercussions. I have relevant press cuttings, pictures, maps and the board of Trade report which I would be happy to share with those interested in local history please call me on **01444 235910**. Others who follow the life and works of Charles Dickens may be able to learn something new. As he concludes in the postscript in 'Our Mutual Friend' about signalmen 'The End'.

Derek Moore

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LIGHT UP HASSOCKS (LUH) – UPDATE. By this time of the year, Sussex Vale Rotary would normally be in the early stages of making more detailed arrangements for LUH, due to be held on 4th December. However, with the impact of the coronavirus crisis and the unpredictable future it has caused, it has been decided we are not in a position to proceed with preparatory steps for the full celebration. So, it is with great regret we have to announce that LUH will be deferred until 2021. If at all possible, we will still try to hold some of the less critical elements of the event. For instance, the 'Christmas Poster' competition and 'Best Dressed Window' could go ahead and it might be possible for local businesses to have a lower-key open evening. We will monitor the situation and discuss with the various interested parties and help where we can.

Coronavirus Crisis - Sussex Vale is continuing with our efforts to support local communities. We are helping the local foodbanks and will also replenish the Children's Activity Packs when they are needed. As there still remains a need for our emergency food parcels, we will be distributing them through the local infant and primary schools in Ditchling, Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint. A number of online quizzes have

been arranged to raise some funds for local charities, the most recent one was on behalf of The Air Ambulance and we were able to send them a donation of £400.00. If you like 'quizzing' and want to find a way to support local organisations, keep an eye on our Facebook page and join in the next one. You never know you might win! Many thanks to all those who have already supported us. As with most charitable organisations, the restrictions put in place to counter Covid-19 has severely restricted our ability to raise funds through participatory events, so your help will be appreciated. New President On the brighter side, everything moves on and Tom Brierley will be our new President for 2020 – 2021, taking over on 1st July from Bernard O'Rourke. Many thanks are due to Bernard who has dealt with lots of difficulties over the past two years, showing patience and determination, whilst maintaining a good sense of humour. Over to you Tom! If you are interested in learning more about Rotary and how you can help, please contact our club secretary on secretary@rotary-sxvale.org.uk, or 07546 111996, he will be 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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So, if you had told us in February that by the end of March we would be in total lock down, schools would be closed, people would be working from home, learning from home and lives would be changed beyond recognition, no one would have been believed it.

But that is the reality that we are all living in. At Downlands, our school community has worked hard to ensure that pupils aren't just learning from home but they are thriving from home and keeping up with their education. We had to say a swift goodbye to our Year 11 students on Friday 19th March, we were lucky that with the dedication and speed of our staff we could put together a fun farewell for them all and they went home with their Year Books and Leavers Hoodies in hand. They may have missed their GCSE exams and many other rite of passage milestones but they still have their school prom to look forward to. We can't wait to enjoy this celebration with you all.

Our students embraced learning from home with a positivity that we as a school are hugely proud of. Our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages are full of the work produced by our students. They have remained focussed and on task and produced some spectacular pieces of work. We have kept in regular

contact with our parents and have received many emails thanking the staff for all they are doing.

We have remained open for our key worker students and kept them busy with a variety of tasks that were also offered to our home learners. Our staff have been very creative and come up with many interesting, fun and sometimes very challenging challenges, including a Cook Off, art competition reading challenge, writing competition and our PE department continually set fitness challenges to keep our students in tip top condition.

On the 15th June we welcomed back many of our Year 10 students. This year group is probably one of the most affected by lockdown and have been doing their best to keep up with their GCSE studies at home. Having them back in school has been a great boost to the students and the teachers alike. The school is quiet and feels very strange when you are there, it's missing that common denominator of every school, the hustle and bustle of the corridors and the noise created by the exchange of information from student to student.

It's been an interesting & busy few months and we don't know what the picture of our school will look like in September. What we do know is that whatever we are facing we will face it together and when September comes around we will welcome our new Year 7's to our school and ensure that they get as much from Downlands as every child that passes through our doors deserves.

Gail Wickens

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HURSTPIERPOINT OPEN GARDENS – The Film – Access Released **21st June** on www.hurstpierpointopengardens.org.uk, facebook: [hurstpierpoint open gardens](https://www.facebook.com/hurstpierpointopengardens)

What a year it's been – I don't think anyone has remained untouched by the virus in some way or another and the world seems slightly surreal at the moment.

One such tragic result of the pandemic is that our local St Peter and St James Hospice will lose £1m in fundraising because of cancelled charity events. The Hospice relies heavily on these funds and this year's shortfall will have a huge impact on them.

Hurstpierpoint Open Gardens was just one of the victims of the cancellations. Having raised over £9,000 last year, our team was devastated to be unable to support the Hospice in its year of real need.

Desperate for a solution, our team of 8 put our heads together and the result is 'Hurstpierpoint Open Gardens – the Film'. If we can't bring you to our gardens, then we will bring our gardens to you.

With the help of talented local photographer, Richard Paice, we now have a collection of short films of 10 stunning Hurstpierpoint gardens ranging from majestic with lakes and views to the South Downs to smaller, imaginative and peaceful hideaways. (And a couple of surprise treats)

This year, you can put the kettle on, make a cuppa, cut a slice of cake, put your feet up and still enjoy delights of Hurstpierpoint Open Gardens on your smartphone, tablet, laptop or PC. All in the knowledge that you are staying safe.

We have maintained the cost of access at the normal Open Gardens rate (to cover all 10 garden films) but additional donations will be hugely welcomed.

The films will be released on **21st June**. The link on the sites at the top of this page will take you to a donations page and then to the films page. You can choose to watch them individually at different times or sit back and have a marathon session watching them all in one go, which will last about an hour.

Thanks to 12 sponsors, the funds are already coming in and our dearest wish is to raise as much as we can this year for The Hospice which has served so many of us so well in our own hours of need.

Those on social media, please share the publicity The films will be released on **21st June**. The link on the sites at the top of this page will take you to a donations page and then to the films page. You can choose to watch them individually at different times or sit back and have a marathon session watching them all in one go, which will last about an hour.

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Those on social media, please share the publicity which has been posted as much as possible. Maybe your relatives in Australia would like to see our little Sussex Village gardens? Or, maybe you could donate on behalf of a friend and send the link to them as a birthday present – saying you've paid. Care homes may like to make a donation and show the film to residents to cheer up a grey day.

The possibilities are endless and Hurstpierpoint Open Gardens won't let a virus get in the way of its historical success in raising much-needed funds for our Hospice.

Prue Peters



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STAR CINEMA Regretfully we are uncertain when the next film night will be. Thank you for all the support you have shown at previous film nights, and we hope to be back with you as soon as possible.

Liz Edmunds

V.E. DAY! It is nice to be back keeping in touch with our local Communities and firstly many congratulations to our Jo at Q.D. who, after all, is the one who keeps us all in touch - may she long continue.

We were so disappointed to have to cancel our show planned to celebrate the 75th anniversary of V.E. DAY at the Adastra Hall. We were enjoying getting together again as a group and of course looking forward to meeting you all in our audience once more.

Norman Armstrong, our usual guest artiste had some lovely songs planned and David Sachon, M.C. and Steve. Marie and Peter were only too happy to operate lights and sound for us so it was a huge blow to have to cancel. Stella Simmons wrote a special V.E. DAY poem (see July talka-

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bout) for our programme and we were to hear of Anisah's experience actually in Germany during war time. There were also plenty of Dame Vera Lynn's and Billy Cottons songs to be sung by our cast and audience. An afternoon of variety promised in the programme but it was not to be and we had to join other events in cancelling the show. We do have plans to welcome you to a Christmas concert at the Adastra Hall on Saturday afternoon **19th December** so will be keeping everything crossed that it can go ahead. Meanwhile - please stay well and keep safe.

From your friends and neighbours

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION (HAS-SOCKS)

We are planning to re-open during August. We will put final dates on our facebook page and the notice board in Woodsland Road. Members old and new will be most welcome and we will endeavour to give you an enjoyable time as possible allowing for Covid 19 restrictions. We are planning your safety first.

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GREAT GREEN BUSH CRICKET - THE SOUND OF SILENCE

I'm a huge fan of sci-fi B-movies and they don't come any better (or worse) than 1957's *Beginning of the End*. It's the usual story; overeager government scientists intent on increasing crop yield inadvertently create giant irradiated grasshoppers the size of doubler decker buses, which set about destroying Chicago. There are some similar creatures lurking around Sussex. OK, they're not going to come stomping around Sompting any day soon but they're still mighty impressive.

The Great Green Bush Cricket can claim to be Britain's biggest insect. Yet this Godzilla of the undergrowth is surprisingly hard to see. Its long, leaf-like body blends in amongst the brambles rendering it almost invisible. Bug eyes, impressive jaws and twirling antennae give it some monster movie credentials but there's nothing to fear from this harmless native.

There are about 35 species of crickets and grasshoppers (Orthoptera) in Britain. Crickets differ from grasshoppers by having much longer, thread-like antennae and they 'sing' by rubbing their wings together (while grasshoppers rub their legs against their wings). This song, or stridulation, is the male's way of romancing a female – who, if interested, will reply. The best chance of finding the Great Green Bush Cricket is to head out

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on a warm August evening and listen for their downland duets – a loud, incessant rattle. Imagine an enthusiastic maraca player.

I recently went for a walk through the flower-rich meadows of Sussex Wildlife Trust's Southerham reserve. I was blown away by the wall of sound created by hundreds of crickets and grasshoppers but it became apparent that not everyone could hear this orthopteran orchestra. The sad truth is that as we get older our ears can't tune in to the higher frequencies produced by these insects and species by species they fall silent. I have a compilation CD of the chirps and buzzes of Britain's crickets and grasshoppers – a sort of 'Now That's What I Call Stridulation'. I played it this morning and track 24 had gone. It was there a few years ago but now... silence. I've started to lose my crickets. The beginning of the end.

It isn't just me who will be hearing less wildlife in the future. Our countryside is becoming quieter as crickets, bees and birds vanish. Wildflower meadows, the home to crickets and grasshoppers, have been lost and the wildlife that depends on them have silently disappeared. The 'Silent Spring' predicted by Rachel Carson in 1962 has seeped across every season. This August, get out and listen to the sounds of summer before they fade.

Michael Blencowe



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STEVE'S BACK PAGE GOSSIP

WOW what a month that was!

Difficult to know what to start with, but firstly I must say how sad it was to hear of the passing of Dame Vera. She was an icon of everything that's good in this world. During my early days of being here in Hassocks she was a regular visitor to the local shops and from time to time used to pop into buy wild bird seed having cycled in from Ditchling. I wonder if the residents of Ditchling will sort out a statue of her – Hang on a minute I am a one of those residents so yes this is how I see it – the statue should be in bronze and of her in her young days dressed in the uniform she wore to entertain the troops in Burma complete with cap and in a singing pose or stance. It should be then placed next to the war memorial at the entrance to the village where on Remembrance Sunday a poppy garland could be hung around her neck, I think that would be great and well deserved

– Anybody know how much a statue costs?

It's good to see all the shops and businesses open again and hopefully thriving. There does seem to be a few who are not quite sure what they are doing yet, a couple of weeks ago I saw a group of men go into Costa Coffee and start moving furniture about in what I thought was a preliminary visit in a prelude to opening, but that at the moment doesn't seem to be happening, it's a question of watch this space, but if it is a Costa Coffee you're particularly into then there's always the machine in Bugden's. I suppose in all the years I've been here I've had about 5 calls involving snakes. We only really have 2 snakes in this country the common grass snake and the adder or viper as it used to be called because of the distinctive 'V' on its head, neither of these like to be in areas which have a lot of people moving around. So when a greyish snake was seen slithering across Adastra Park, it was unlikely to be an adder with dementia, it could only be a snake which was not native to this country and as it showed no fear of people, it could only be an escaped pet. Luckily nothing happened to it on its journey, apart from some incredible acts of bravery by the general public filming it, I'm surprised no-one tried to do a selfie with it. Anyway, it next came to my attention when a rather concerned lady phoned me to say she had a rather large snake slithering up her hallway and please would I get round there very quickly because neither her or her daughter were great snake lovers and were verging on becoming hysterical, so I grabbed a pillow case (seems strange I know but it is the best way to transport a snake) and shot round to the address I was given. This snake obviously thought if I'm going to settle down in a house it's going to be nice, spacious and pretty luxurious, it was such a shame it was discovered so early on in its plan, but it did stand out on the beautiful cream carpet - it was a corn snake about a metre long and very pretty light and dark grey and had no objection to being picked up, so it was obviously an escaped pet or one that had been let go by a very irresponsible owner. It now resides at Deano's Reptile Shack in Ditchling. As for the family whose house it invaded I think a very stiff drink was the order of the day when I left.

As always thank you very much to all our customers for staying local and keeping our small shops open and in business
Small Shops Matter. Love Steve

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