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THE ACORNS Now that Summer is here, Acorns 'Stay and play' sessions are back! Parents with little ones come to play, explore and have fun in the natural surroundings of our Westmeston Nursery near Ditchling.

We also host adventure days for children aged 5 and 8 on Tuesdays and Fridays. There is often a lovely walk to the woods or up on the Downs. Adventure days offer children a unique forest-school experience, with the freedom and space to play, climb trees, explore and develop their own ideas.

Home-cooked lunches, which children sometimes help prepare, are an important part of the day.

Children bring their own bikes and scooters and they quickly become very proficient.

Acorns Holiday Fun! for two to eleven year olds starts on July 26th. This offers a host of activities, but the children's days can be as busy or chilled as they choose.



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Janet Irwin

THE BEACON PARISH We're really enjoying being able to meet in person for a 10 am service each Sunday, which follows current Covid guidelines. Whilst the majority of these services have been at St. Margaret's Church in Ditchling, we've also enjoyed being at Streat Church during May and on Sunday **20th June** the service will be at 10 am at St. Martin's Church, Westmeston. The services on **30th May, 6th June, 13th June and 27th June** will be at St. Margaret's Ditchling. Services are recorded and available to watch later via our website at **www.beaconparish.co.uk/**

Sherrian Guest

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ADASTRA HALL The Management Committee of Adastra Hall is seeking new members with skills and time to support the Hall for the benefit of the local community. Pretty well all of you will have used the Hall at some point, maybe to go to a talk, an interest group, a private event or even just to cast your vote. We have survived lockdown with generous grants from the council to keep us afloat, and look forward to getting back to business as normal.

As Trustees the committee manages every aspect, from making sure the cleaning arrangements are sound, deciding which minor bits of maintenance we can do ourselves and which we need to call in the professionals for, to identifying the next updating project and where the money is going to come from.

If you think you can contribute to our efforts we would love to hear from you. We meet approximately every 6 weeks, although this is flexible. We have been putting out feelers for

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a while now and don't mean to sound desperate - we are not. There is just very little slack in our structure and some new blood would be welcome. I know that I read three plaintive ads for secretary over a couple of years before deciding it was something that I could usefully do! So I believe new members are out there, thinking about it....

If you would like to know more please email me on janetb545@gmail.com.

Janet Bell

HASSOCKS URC CHURCH FRIENDS

Just a reminder that the United Reformed Church Keymer Road, Hassocks is now open on a Sunday at 10 am to 11.15 am, just turn up through this time of difficulty.

Colin South

Deadline for the July issue

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ROSEMARY HARDING Many of you in Hassocks and the surrounding area may have supported the local cat charity 'Paws & Claws' by attending one of their coffee mornings at the Adastra Hall, and seen articles in the Talk About written by the organiser Rosemary Harding.

I'm sorry to say that Rosemary passed away earlier this year and the Chairman of Paws & Claws, Lyn Basset, has asked me to pass on this tribute to her. We were very sad to hear that Rosemary passed away, peacefully in a nursing home on 7th March after a period of illness. You will all have many memories of her involvement in various areas of community life over the years.

As Chairman of Paws & Claws, I met Rosemary about twenty years ago when she adopted the first of three elderly cats from us. She then went on to take over the running of our quarterly coffee mornings at the Adastra Hall which received good local support not only by people attending the event but also with her 'team' who helped her on the day, people such as Pat & Doug; Brenda; Norman & Jenny; Maureen; Penny and

Penny M as well as many others. This was an enormous undertaking which Rosemary carried out with great efficiency, and which brought in good sums of money, much needed for our small, local charity run by volunteers. Rosemary was also an excellent cake maker and sold them at both this, and other events.

In addition, she very generously provided good tombola and raffle prizes, all at her own expense. Rosemary was a great believer in the work that we carry out and her generosity extended to her becoming a sponsor of our Pavilion Cats who live with us on a permanent basis if they are unable to be rehomed either due to age or ill health. She also contributed generously with money to help us when, 15 years ago, we bought both the property and land at Sayers Common on which we purpose built our own rescue centre.

On behalf of myself and my fellow Trustees at Paws & Claws we are very grateful for the many years that Rosemary supported us with both fundraising and sponsorship, she will be greatly missed.

David Tettersell



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HURSTPIERPOINT PLAYERS BACK IN ACTION! WITH ONE - BOUND WE ARE FREE!

and provided the Prime Minister's projected dates for easing the current 'lock-down' continue as published we shall be opening the doors of our beautifully redesigned auditorium at 147 High Street and inviting audiences to join us for our first post-Covid production. This will be "The Boadicea of Britannia Street" a new, funny and touching full-length play by Ade Morris, postponed from 2020, with live performances from **6th to 10th July** this year.

Jo Kearns will direct – she's not allowed the grass to grow under her feet, having already held suitably distanced readings followed by open air auditions. Casting is now complete and rehearsals start from 17th May.

"Boadicea" has a cast of four women whose ages range from 60-ish down to 20-ish, set in the present day and follows the efforts of Fran, a local librarian to establish a women's writ-

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ers' forum from the diverse group of three who show up. Misunderstandings abound, not helped by the principal character's pre-disposition to say one thing and mean another!

The Players are always pleased to welcome new Members – our 2021/22 membership year began on 1st May and whether you are interested in acting, directing, stage management [or everything] we would love to hear from you. Full details are available now on our website: **www.hurstplayers.org.uk** - where booking details will be available as soon as possible.

Honestly, we can't wait!

Anne Hopper

DITCHLING DOWNS WI Our next meeting will be on the **1st June**, via Zoom at 7.30 pm. It is entitled "The Fab Fifties - A Vintage Musical Entertainment" by Graham Harrison. We are very much hoping that after that we will be able to resume our normal face to face meetings in the Village Hall. We'll keep you informed!

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HURST HASSOCKS AND DITCHLING U3A: ZOOMING OUT OF LOCKDOWN.

It's bold for an organisation to claim that it can offer the opportunity to 'Learn, Laugh, And Live', but that's the ambition of u3a, a national organisation and its local Hurst, Hassocks and Ditchling group. U3A is aimed especially at those no longer in full time work, perhaps newly or not newly retired, and wanting to learn new skills or acquire additional knowledge or to share their own experiences and expertise while meeting other local people. And at HHDu3a a lot is on offer, 40+ groups offering everything from Archaeology and Canasta to Wine Appreciation and Yoga, taking in reading circles, language lessons and music groups along the way. There are also Trips Out and monthly Speaker Meetings, the latter being just one of the activities which has continued throughout the pandemic thanks to Zoom. There is also a links with S.U/N. (Sussex u3as) and their monthly study days and the day events and Summer schools of the national u3a.

One member, newly arrived in Hassocks, says 'I had no idea there was such a strong community here and it's been great to meet new people. What really impresses me is that groups have found a way of continuing even during this last tough year.'

Now Hurst, Hassocks and Ditchling u3a is looking forward to emerging from lockdown with new energy and building towards 2022 which marks the 10th anniversary of its founding. **2nd June** is national U3A Day, marked locally on that day with a stall in the morning outside National Tyres in Hassocks. We are hoping to have a stall in Hurstpierpoint in the afternoon and a visit the next day to the Ditchling Market. This will be followed up with a stall at the Hassocks Village Market on **26th June**. On all these occasions members will be pleased to meet and talk with those wanting to learn more. More can be found on the U3A Hurst, Hassocks and Ditchling Facebook page, the website u3asites.org.uk/hhd or contact hhdu3a@gmail.com.

Jeremy Weinstein

THE WHITE GOOSE

As I wandered, on-and-on
I saw a goose with colour wan.
Then shortly, in a better light
Could see it was completely white -
it must have had an awful fright.
Then as my brain came more switched on
I saw it was a lovely swan....

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*Naomi Jerrey, Karen Clarke
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WILDFLOWERS ON OUR VERGES?

Road verges could be great for wildflowers, providing insects with food, shelter and nesting sites. As insect populations fall they're especially needed. Half of our 25 native bumblebee species are in decline as are 71% of our native butterfly species. Much of this is due to habitat loss: in the UK we have lost 7.5 m acres of nectar-rich hay meadows since 1930s. Only 1% of our countryside now provides flowers for pollinators.

Could our road verges become wildflower verges? Most verges don't have wildflowers because they are cut too frequently (not allowing wildflowers to grow), or at the wrong time (so flowers can't set seed), and cuttings are not removed (making the soil too fertile for wildflowers). Many counties are now allowing wildflowers to bloom along roadsides while maintaining key safety features such as clear lines of visibility. West Sussex County Council is taking steps in that direction through their new 'community road verges' project, part of their Pollinator Action Plan.

HKD Transition, working with our colleagues in Hurst Rethink, are planning a pilot community road verge in Hassocks this year. WSCC contractors will not mow this verge on the usual schedule this spring and we will survey over the next few months to see what flowers grow. When WSCC mows in summer volun-

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teers will rake up the cuttings. The research this year will enable us to understand what pollinator-friendly species are present already, and how we can best support and extend these in the future.

By starting small with just one road verge we can identify any problems to be overcome and gather input to plan next year. For more information, to suggest a road verge or volunteer to get involved email

info@hkddtransition.org.uk

Juliet Merrifield

HURSTPIERPOINT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY SUMMER SHOW

We are hoping, restrictions permitting, that the summer show will be taking place at 2.15pm on Saturday **26th June** in Hurstpierpoint Village Hall. There will be all the usual summer flowers, fruit and vegetables as well as handicraft, cookery, photography and children's exhibits. All exhibitors

are welcome simply pick up a schedule from Gibsons in the High Street for full details. Homemade cake and tea, raffle and auction of produce.

Kathy Green

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~ MENU ~

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(I broke down on the M25 myself in 2017)

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THE WINDMILLS JUNIOR SCHOOL

We are delighted that our Year 6 residential trip is finally able to take place, having been moved from September, to February and then to May! We hope the children will have a fantastic, action-packed week and we are so grateful to the staff who have agreed to go and support the children when they haven't yet had the chance to go away with their own family and friends.

Our Year 6 children are learning all about the environment this term, which coincided with World Earth Day – on this day, each of the classes were asked to consider what small things they could do that would make a difference and agree on a class pledge. Really getting the children to understand that it is the small things that go together to make big changes over time.

All of the children have been given the opportunity to impact on the future in another way; they have been asked to take part in The Big

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Ask. This is the largest ever consultation with children aged between 4 and 17 years in England. It aims to find out children's concerns and aspirations about the future, so that the government can put children at the heart of our country's recovery from the pandemic.

Years 5 and 6 have been enjoying using the Lego kits to build a wide range of structures and mechanisms. They have also completed a DT computing project to build a Rover to explore Space and other Hidden Kingdoms.

We're really pleased to be able to offer the Year 4 group the opportunity to complete their swimming tuition, which unfortunately had to stop during the lockdown. This is a crucial life skill and something that we really wouldn't want them to miss out on.

Year 3 have been getting creative and enjoying the paintings of Wassily Kandinsky. They have recreated their own art whilst listening to classical music. The quality of work and the atmosphere in the classroom has just been

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Although we are still some way off from being able to operate in a 'normal' way, it is great to have activities such as trips, swimming and music lessons starting up and we hope it won't be too long before we can offer the full range of activities once again.

Sally Jacobs

HURSTPIERPOINT GYMNASTICS UP- DATE A step towards normality!

Virtually all of our gymnasts have returned, with a number of new faces enjoying their first classes with us.

We have now given out all of the British Gymnastics awards gained last year, and offer our special congratulations to Layla Whipp, Isabel Faulkner and Emily Holmes who have won the trophies awarded to the Top Infant, Top Junior and Top Senior for July 2020.

We are now planning our Annual Championship competitions, to take place during regular classes towards the end of term. At last the gymnasts will be able to demonstrate their skills in a competitive environment.

We currently have vacancies in all but our preschool boys class – and they will have spaces in September.

We still ask all gymnasts to double check for updates on the News page of our website
www.hurstpierpointgym.co.uk.

Andrew

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HASSOCKS GOES GOLD POSTER COMPETITION!

Hassocks Goes Gold is working to change the outcomes of childhood cancer. Did you know that cancer is the single biggest killer of children aged 1 to 14 in the UK?

Each year Hassocks Goes Gold holds a competition for designs to incorporate into a beautiful golden poster for businesses and residents to display. The theme for the first year was Golden Sunflowers, evolving into our annual Sunflower Growing Competition which is now well underway and evident in many gardens around the village. The theme in the second year was Golden Sunrises & Sunsets with beautiful shining drawings from all three Hassocks schools.

This year the theme is **GOLDEN BUTTERFLIES!**

The competition is open to all ages and we hope to receive entries from adults and nurs-

ery age children as well as from Hassocks Infants, Windmills Junior & Downlands.

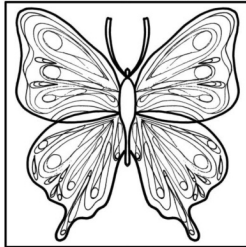
Entry forms can be downloaded from the Hassocks Goes Gold facebook page, and will contain a choice of free drawing or colouring in. Entries close on Wednesday **30th June** and can be dropped into QD Stationery.

The winners of the competition in each age group will receive a prize and they will appear in the final golden poster.

Copies of the poster will be available from QD Stationery from Au-

gust for a small fee, with all proceeds going to funding research into Childhood Cancer. It is my ambition to get one of these Golden Butterfly posters displayed in every household in Hassocks to help raise the crucial awareness and funds needed to improve outcomes of children diagnosed with cancer.

I look forward to seeing all your beautiful golden butterflies! *Rachel Bartlett-Bundy*





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ADONIS BLUE On Sussex Wildlife Trust's Malling Down nature reserve just fifteen minutes' walk from the centre of Lewes, something is stirring. Something rather beautiful. Something rather... blue.

The Adonis Blue must be in with a good chance of being crowned our most beautiful butterfly. The male's dazzling, electric blue wings are an insult to all other butterfly species who consider themselves blue. Believe me - you haven't experienced blue until you've watched a male Adonis Blue fly past. And, like many other famous Lewes residents, our Adonis Blues also have a colourful and somewhat odd life history.

During the larval stage of its life cycle, the Adonis Blue caterpillar exudes a sugary sweet secretion and, amazingly, sings an enticing siren's song. This drives local ants into a frenzy and they fall under its spell. With its sugar-drunk, loved-up ant admirers in tow, the caterpillar cruises the Lewes Downs with the ants protecting it against parasites and predators. Each evening, when the caterpillar retreats to the soil, the ants bury it - effectively tucking it in for the night. It's amazing what devotion you can get around these parts in return for a drink and a song.

When it's time for the caterpillar to pupate, the ants stand guard over the chrysalis too in an underground chamber, and when the adult butterfly emerges they escort it to the surface. Without so much as a thank you for their loyalty,

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the butterfly unfurls its wings and deserts them for the skies above - no doubt leaving the ants wondering how they're going to explain themselves to the queen when they get home.

The existence of this wonderful butterfly is only made possible due to the Sussex Wildlife Trust's careful management of Malling Down. The Trust's rare breed sheep, which you can see from Lewes High Street, graze the reserve to ensure the correct habitat is maintained for this rare species. An important factor in the Adonis Blue's life cycle is heat, and if the grass here gets too tall the temperature at ground level drops. Without the grazing management, the fantastic downland habitat would disappear, along with all the amazing species that depend on it.

Sussex Wildlife Trust is an independent charity caring for wildlife and habitats throughout Sussex. Founded in 1961, we have worked with local people for over half a century to make Sussex richer in wildlife.

We rely on the support of our members to help protect our rich natural heritage. Please consider supporting our work. As a member you will be invited to join me on our regular wildlife walks and also enjoy free events, discounts on wildlife courses, Wildlife magazine and our Sussex guide book, *Discovering Wildlife*. It's easy to join online at sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/join

Michael Blencowe



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NAMES OF THE PHOTO OF THE CRICKET TEAM

In the front row 2nd from the left is my uncle Robert (Bob), the 5th from the left is my uncle Eric with my late cousin Christine on his lap.

In the back row 4th from the right is my father William (Bill) I think that the man next to Bob with child had a surname of Phillips?

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THE SCULPTOR

A Sculptor is looking, transfixed, at a stone
It's not square or round, it's something he
found, While walking around, Or perhaps
just a lump, from a quarry dump.

He'll look for a sign, of a curve or a line
A hint of a shape, of a man or an ape
Or a fish or a bird or something absurd
Or an abstract form, something out of the norm
Or a mouse or a mole, or a shape with a hole.

Then if all else fails, having bitten his nails
He'll ask Pauline or Jo, who are bound to
know.

Then off he'll go, with blow after blow, of
nylon on steel - He'll soon get the feel.

Then what a surprise, for before his eyes

Has been gradually born, a beautiful form,
that was there all the time - in a stone named
lime.

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DOWNLANDS SCHOOL NEWS

Dear Reader, So Spring has sprung and the Mason Bees have hatched? If you don't follow our social media pages you won't know what I'm talking about, so I'll explain ... We have a 'wellbeing garden' here at Downlands, for use by pupils and staff. It is maintained by our Climate Change Team and during early April we were lucky enough to witness the hatching

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of 100's of Mason Bees. Mason Bees are solitary creatures, named for their habit of using mud or other "masonry" products in constructing their nests, which are made in naturally occurring gaps such as between cracks in stones or other small dark cavities. Mr Cole, our Climate Change Team Leader led the team in placing the pupae into the specially designed wooden box home for the bees and almost instantly the hatching began. It was a treat to be able to see this wonder of nature take place before our very eyes.

Earth Day Poster Competition - We were approached by Amanda & Bob from the Hassocks Community Organisation with the wonderful idea of running a poster competition for our students with the prize being to have their posters made into signs that would

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be put up around the village and surrounding areas. Their fabulous suggestion coincidentally coincided with Earth Day on the 22nd April, so Downlands, Hassocks Community Organisation and Hassocks Parish Council have combined forces and launched the 'Downlands Earth Day Poster Competition' The 2021 theme of Earth Day is 'Restore our Earth' and with this in mind we have asked all posters to:

Raise awareness of the effects that dropping litter has on our community, our wildlife and the Earth as a whole.

Remind us all how important it is to put litter into a bin or to take it home.

Demonstrate the importance of Community to our school.

The posters will be judged by members of Hassocks Parish Council and Hassocks Community Organisation. There will be one winner per Year group and each of the winning posters will appear around our neighbourhood

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later this year.

All entries will be featured on our social media pages once the winners have been announced.

Fundraising update - Our Lottery is being very well supported and we hope to encourage more support among our community. Weekly the prize is somewhere between £55-£75 depending on how many tickets have been purchased. For more information please visit **donatemyschool.com/downlands-community-school-2460**

We are still fundraising to have our School Counsellor with us for an extra day per week. Currently we have a school counsellor for one day a week. We had a waiting list before the pandemic, but since returning to school the increase in the need for this support has increased to the point that we really do need to have a counsellor onsite for an additional day a week. The cost of this is £10,000. We are currently applying for grants locally to try and

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Burgess Hill Radio
Connecting With Your Community

Summer Fayre – Saturday **26th June**. We are excited to say that our DSA are planning to hold our Summer Fayre on Saturday **26th June** – we are hoping that all social distancing measures will have been lifted by then and we can go ahead with our usual event. Watch this space, more to follow!

Thank you, as always, for your support, from the staff, students & parents at Downlands Community School.
Gail Wickens

THE GREAT WESTERN TRAIN

The raucous refrain
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I must come again -
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HASSOCKS TOWNSWOMENS GUILD

Hello everyone, I hope that you are all well and just a message to keep in touch.. It is uncertain at the moment when we will be able to meet up again for our meetings. Even when the Age Concern meeting room opens again, it would be difficult if social distancing and mask wearing is required. Also the necessary rules, regarding cleaning after the meeting, would be difficult too. We still do not have a full committee, no one has stepped forward to take on the role of Treasurer so we are in limbo at the moment. Unfortunately we have lost several members in the last few months, including our past President, Joyce Biggs which is sad. On a brighter note it was lovely to see the photograph in magazine of members of the Guild in the sixties, I only recognised two ladies!! I hope you are keeping in touch with each other and look forward to the time when we can get together again. In the meantime keep safe and enjoy the summer.

Sheila Southwell (chairman)

WANTED If you have any old photos, poems, recipes, stories, events or anything of interest you would like included please email us at ed@villagemagazines.co.uk or send it to QD Stationery, 52 Keymer Road, Hassocks, West Sussex BN6 8AR. **Deadline for the July Issue is 1st June 2021.**

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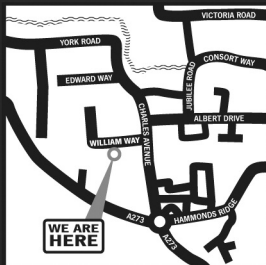
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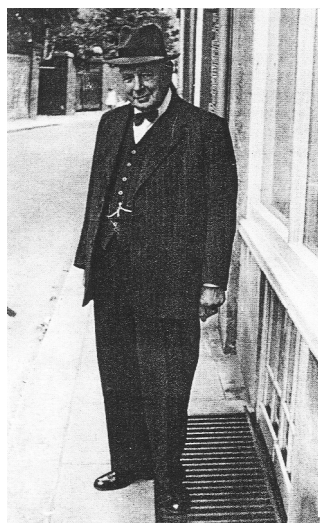
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His first wife was

Margaret Clara Baker who was the sister to Mr Baker the Butcher in the village who died on 20th February 1930 at St Georges Nursing Home, Hurstpierpoint.

He remarried Ada Elizabeth Payton in 1938. Frank died on 23rd July 1963. *Dave Evans*

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The BREMF website **www.bremf.org.uk** shows all the details of the events on offer and you can join the mailing list there to request a brochure. Ticket booking (online or by post) opens on 10th May.

Mike Clemens

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LOCAL GIRLS RAISE MUCH NEEDED FUNDS FOR CANCER RESEARCH UK

We thank Lana and Alethea Mansfield and Holly Baker who raised £272 on a cake stall outside their house in Grand Avenue.

It always means such a lot when such young people help to support such a good cause. As you can imagine Cancer Research has lost such a lot of much needed money during lockdown. Please see the letter I received along with photos.

Dear Lovely People at Cancer Research UK, I have been asking my granny to help me do a bake sale for Cancer Research UK for a while now, but the time has never been right... We have had many family members, and a few friends, battle cancer over the years, and sadly many of them have died - so it is a charity that is close to our hearts. And in the Easter holidays I asked granny again, and she said "Yes"! We held it in our front garden on Saturday 17th April, after spending all day on Friday



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baking... we live next door to my granny, so I helped bake with her in her kitchen and then I helped my mum and my little sister (Alethea, she is 5) bake in our kitchen. We made....

A chocolate sponge cake with vanilla butter cream and a smartie on each slice, shortbread, coffee and walnut fairy cakes (me and granny) Chocolate rice crispie nests with mini eggs, mini fairy cakes with icing and sprinkles, lemon drizzle cake (mummy and Alethea) Vanilla butterfly buns, milk chocolate chunk muffins, chocolate oat biscuits (me and mummy)

On Friday, my mum and I wrapped up all the cakes and made prices, I made a few posters for the bake sale as well. We made a pot for donations and a float for the cake sales, and made sure we had clean masks, aprons, and gloves for everyone. On Saturday morning my friend Holly came to help us, we cleaned the tables and chairs we were using and set up for the sale. It was a bit chilly at first, but dry and



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sunny, and we then waited for customers!

My little sister Alethea was so cute, she got lots of people to stop by saying to them, "We are having a bake sale for Cancer Research and these are the mini rainbow sprinkle angel cakes I made." She got lots of people to stop and sold all her cakes first - well, first after mummy's lemon drizzle cake!

My family and family friends were very supportive, if they could not make it or lived too far then they made a donation. But lots of our family friends did come and bought some cakes or made a donation - along with our lovely neighbours. Lots of people stopped even if it was to apologise for not having any money on them, some even came back or brought their family back to buy cakes or donate. We even had 2 people who weren't able to come back on Saturday come on Sunday to drop off a donation, one of them couldn't remember our address and went onto Facebook to find us so he could come and donate -

amazing! Although my mum isn't on Facebook, one of her friend's spotted his comment and directed him to us. We are so amazed at how well the sale went and how lovely everyone was, lots of people waved at us as they drove past - we waved at a delivery man so much he stopped and donated. Mummy put a poster in the window to thank everyone for supporting us and to let people know how much we raised which she had to change 5 times over the week when more and more donations came in.

In total, after selling all the cakes we raised £117.50 and, on the morning, we had received £63.40 in donations - £180.90 total.

We told my auntie the total, and she donated £19.10 to bring the total to £200. But the donations didn't stop there... and so the total we are sending you is £272!

Mummy printed a couple of pictures for you to send with this letter, and a cheque for our donation.

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We had so much fun making the cakes and selling them, and meeting so many people from the village- although mummy did have a moment when she said she thought we may not sell all the cakes, and there would be a lot of cakes for us to eat!

I hope that our donation can help make life a little easier for someone who is living with cancer.

Best wishes Lana, Alethea, and Sam (Mummy) Holly and Kay (Granny)

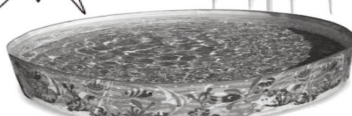
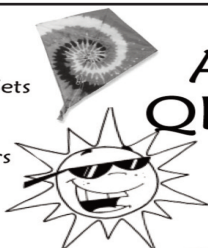
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Stella Jenner

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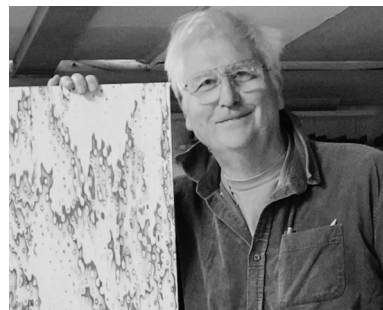


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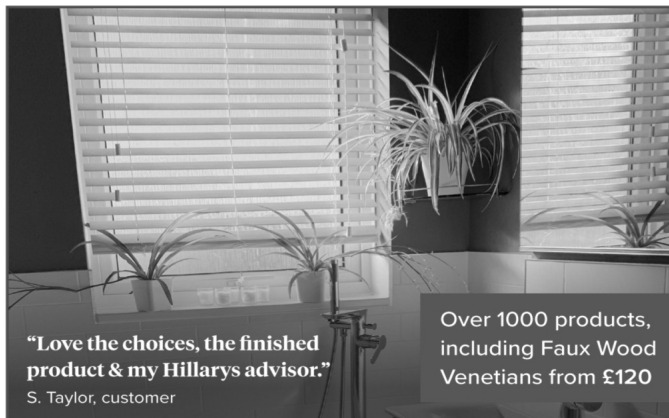
I run Kitchen Carousel. This year we didn't start until end of February. Then we had to get cracking. You can see the results on our website. We made the first kitchen for Mrs W in Hassocks. Windows out walls out. Cleverly designed corner with huge drawers ... one of my signature designs. Then, in a small L shape space we fitted a pull-out custom larder, a tall oven, a washing machine, dishwasher, sink, an integrated fridge, shelves and other stuff. The tops were Corian. A brilliant worksurface that you can re-polish at any time. Next job was Mrs C the jar collector... So, Mrs C got a huge custom corner larder and a tall fridge and some more of my specialist corner drawers which, I have to say, everyone loves to bits. The one of my other specialities...a huge larder just two tins deep! Then we did Mrs W in Lewes...a long galley kitchen with bespoke painted doors and an Oak larder and a custom laundry cupboard to house away the washing machine and a movable island/table and chunky Oak free-floating shelves.

The thing is... every kitchen is different. A successful project starts with good design. Usually it takes a few plans and a few revisions and a few drawings but I don't rush anyone. What's the point of rushing? Our waiting list is now around August/September, so if you would like to talk about your kitchen project you will need to start early. We don't make promises we can't keep. Our fitting takes longer than anyone else. I notice other kitchen companies seem to promise they can complete a major kitchen project in a week! I wish! Genuine kitchen fitting is not just a trade it's an art. We stay small to stay on top. Kitchens are complicated little things. Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on your point of view I have been designing kitchens for rather a long time. So, if you want a brand-new kitchen or just a simple clever refurbishment then do give me a call and I'll see what I can do for you. Most people seem pleasantly surprised ... and so far every single one of my clients who has had a kitchen is happy to show the finished project to my prospective clients. That, I think, is what makes me happiest and lets me sleep at nights. I hope your new 'unlocked' world brings you as **much joy and freedom as possible**. **This is our website:**

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NEWS FROM STONEYWISH The Nature Reserve has been open for a month and while Nature has struggled with the seemingly random and spiteful vagaries of the weather - drought and then frost and now gales, (which have once again brought down power lines across pond and field), Michael has been busy reinventing the Stoneywish Function Room as a Museum to house his history archive. Here there will soon be seasonal exhibitions on specific themes, with a permanent core display of pictures and memorabilia to bring Ditchling, past and present, to life. These may not be items of great financial value, but rather things with a vital story to tell. The story and the story-teller are all, as devotees of the Antiques Roadshow will know. Old things bind lives together, creating a sense of belonging and a

place from which new experiences can be viewed and understood. This bottle was dug up from that dump. This flint was worked and discarded by that stream. This musket ball ended up in that pigpen. Michael's staggering collection of old photographs and mementos of the village bear witness to the passion of an incurable collector and he has been here long enough to have a story to tell about each and every item.

Our house has served as the de facto museum for a long while now. Worked neolithic flints accumulate on window sills. Stoneware bottles trip you up on the stairs. And packets of postcards and newspaper cuttings and the odd first edition or oil painting slip in through the door in innocuous paper wrappings, on their way to the 'Acquisitions Department'.



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“What’s this?” I ask, uncovering a never-before-seen volume or piece of china. “Oh, that. That’s nothing. Just something I bought.” Or: “That came from Peter Smith. I scrounged it from him one Christmas Day. He was carving his turkey on it!”

Above the Rayburn in the kitchen hangs one such memento. It is a wooden shoulder yoke, well-peppered with worm-holes, of the sort you might see in old rustic paintings, the design hardly changed since the days of Shakespeare, when ‘milk came frozen home in pail’. Dairymaids who tended the herds in St. James’ Park in the London of Charles II would have been familiar with just such a device when they were carting and selling their milk and the use of yokes must have continued for as long as cows were milked by hand in the field. We have no date for ours. Perhaps it goes back to the 19th century, when butter and cheese were still processed and sold close to home. We do know, however, that this relic has a

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family story to tell, if only we could coax it to speak. It was found, together with a latch for leading a bull by the nose, in an old hayloft on Gospels Farm, here in Ditchling, and kindly passed on to Michael as a family souvenir. Lou Stenning, Michael’s maternal grandfather, champion runner and wartime Special Constable, might have known the story. He farmed at Gospels in the first half of the 20th century and Michael’s mother was born there in the old farmhouse which was later pulled down. Lou Stenning kept a Guernsey herd on the land, milking his cows by hand in a state-of-the-art milking parlour and delivering the milk, modern-style, from his tradesman’s tricycle. Twice a day he pedalled the rounds of the village ladelling the milk straight from churn to jug as his customers stood at their cottage doors and gates. All unpasteurized and practically warm from the cow! Michael’s mother learned to make butter and skim cream and her skills later kept the family well-sup-

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plied through the lean times of wartime rationing. When not busy with the farm, Lou Stenning indulged his love of running, training for numerous races and winning cups and medals galore, both in Brighton and at the White City, Crystal Palace. A practice run would be 10 circuits around Ditchling Common, with 10 counting sticks set up at the start-cum-finish line. He would knock down one stick for every lap – ten miles in all.

At Gospels, Lou raised three families. Tragedy struck with the deaths of his first two wives. Undaunted, he married again, and Ann Smythe, the portrait-painter who lived in East End Lane, once confided to Michael in a moment of jocular indiscretion: "I remember the milkman! We used to call him Henry the Eighth because he had so many wives!"

The fields at Gospels were named after books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and Michael has always maintained that they were so named by the monks from Lewes Priory who came there to claim their tithes. Another field, Epistles, ended up be-

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longing with the deeds of East End Farm. The Alfords rented and then bought this field and made hay on it for their own cows. When the cows were no more and East End lane became too choked with traffic to allow the passage of hay carts, Michael sold the field back to the owners of Gospels, which was when someone turned out the old hayloft. The yoke found its way onto our wall and the head of the bull-pole was wedged, for want of a better place to put it, in the crook of a birch trunk growing by the front door. Time has gone by and the tree has grown round it, gripping it in an inextricable stranglehold. Finally it will be swallowed up entirely and one fine day, after we are gone, someone will wreck his chainsaw blade on that historic lump of steel and wonder what on earth it is doing there. The stories wind on. As for the yoke. Did Lou use it himself, or bring it from his former home on Bull's Brow, or from his parents' farm at Twineham? Too late now to ask...

When Michael has finished arranging his exhibition we will advertise the opening. Till then the Reserve is open and (all dangling power lines being safely repaired), visitors and campers are welcome to come and experience good old-fashioned freedom and fresh air! For more information, please visit our website: www.stoneywish.com

Rosemary

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STEVE'S BACK PAGE GOSSIP

I hope I find you all well, life is eventually returning to some kind of normality. I've had my 2nd jab so I'm now all vaccinated up!

The village is seeing a few changes, Costa is now totally empty and decorated ready to go on the market and the new dentists has begun work so it can be ready for a summer opening. I'll talk more about the huge block of flats that is planned for the site that at present is occupied by National Tyres. A couple of shops are changing hands but more about that later when it has all been finalised, we wouldn't want to upset anybody would we by letting the cat out of the bag too soon.

Looking back I had a pretty good childhood, it wasn't always fun and games. Like all families we had tough times but my parents had come through the war and were adjusting back to normal life again, sounds familiar doesn't it. The pet shop they'd bought was doing well and I was enjoying myself in the pony club and on my horses, but what about school? I couldn't ride and have fun every day, apparently I needed an education. Let's be honest now I wasn't the brainiest pebble on the beach so a lot of thought was put into where to send me, obviously I had no say in the matter but the outcome was better than I could have imagined – I ended up at the Yateley Manor Preparatory School for boys, a school which prided itself on allowing it's pupils to develop the skills which you were good at and not pushing on lessons that you struggled with. They wanted you to enjoy your school days but at the same time be someone your parents would be proud of, so it was pretty strict. You had to always be polite, never swear, teachers were referred to as Sir or Madam, never mis-behave and always talk properly, break any of the rules and you got the cane so you learnt the hard way. My favourite subjects were English, history, riding and athletics, so the mornings were spent in the classroom, the afternoons were spent being taught by the best available. My riding instructor was Dick Stillwell, a well-known and respected trainer. Twice a week we'd travel to his stables for lessons, when we arrived he said to us "so some of you think you can ride a horse, by the time you leave you'll know that you can ride a horse". His favourite saying was "when you get up on that horse and gather up the reins you become part of it, you are in charge, you are not a passenger and if at any time you feel any fear get off that horse and stick to riding your push bike. He was a very good instructor. My nickname at school was Ed, which was nothing to do with my surname, but came from a popular T.V. series at the time – Mr Ed the talking horse. Apart from riding and athletics you also had to play football, rugby, cricket, tennis and fencing. I had a great time at Yateley Manor and learnt a lot, my brain seems to absorb things I'm interested in, anything else such as algebra or science just seems to bounce off. Mr Chatterton was the headmaster, Wing Commander Smith taught English, Mr Blume taught history, Mr Smethwaite taught maths, I remember he was a very good shot with the chalk rubber, I thank them all for the person I am today.

After I left Yateley Manor I went to the local comprehensive school, the difference between the two was extraordinary. It was like going from heaven to hell, I'd never come across bullying and prejudice before, it was new to me and not a very nice experience. Being well spoken & polite attracted the attention of a small percentage of the school that thought it would be fun to make my life a misery. On my first day I had to have an assessment by the Head teacher who asked me to do a small logarithm exam, I apologised and said "sorry I have never heard of those, however I am very good at what I'm good at, English, History, etc, but I'm very bad at some-things, I know I'll never be good at Maths, Science etc and which will serve me no purpose in my future years". I had no intention of becoming an Accountant, Solicitor, Vicar or Scientist the animal and equestrian life has many tentacles from which I can make a good living from and this is what I'd like to concentrate on, I'm also a trained athlete and I can speak Latin. All this made no difference, trouble was out on the athletics field I could wipe the floor with most of them which made me even more unpopular with this certain crowd, so I started losing just to make them feel better not something I enjoyed doing. To cut a long story short I got out of that school as soon as I could, bullies really are the pits and can have such a prolonged effect on your life, but I bounced back ready for my next adventure.

Ok folks say HAPPY BIRTHDAY STEVE, yes another year has gone past and my last year of my sixties looms, 69 is a good number to go out on, however some people do say to me you're good for 69, what's your secret? Well to be honest it's just hard work and immaturity, growing up is not something I've found easy, once a boy always a boy, but never an old man.

See you next month; love all you fox and wildlife lovers, keep up the good work they need your help to survive. Sign up to the Southdowns Way challenge with your dog on – downlandsa.rallyup.com/sdw

Steve

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