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Your Editors: Joanna Lambe, Heidi Brown, Natalie Dalley & Nicola Botting

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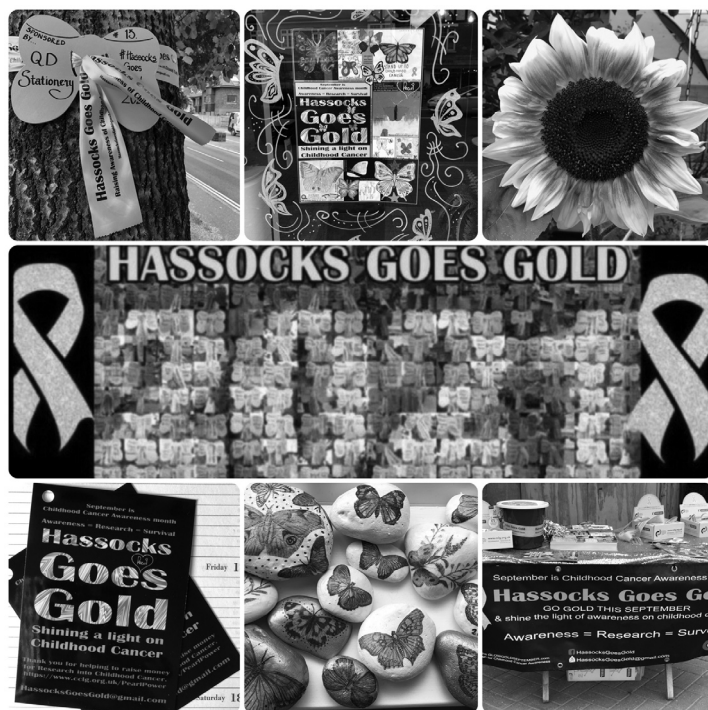
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**HASSOCKS GOES GOLD**



## HASSOCKS WENT GOLD!

HassocksGoesGold is set to top £10,000 for childhood cancer research funding.

A final total will be in next month's issue

but for now  
**THANK YOU  
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Pins, Posters, Auction,  
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### LIGHT UP HASSOCKS – Friday 3rd December.

Preparations by Sussex Vale Rotary continue, with our fund raising to finance the event and with the help of Hassocks Community Association. The allocation of stalls is now underway. If you have not already registered a request for a spot to set up your stall, please email [lightuphassocks@gmail.com](mailto:lightuphassocks@gmail.com) for an application form, as soon as possible. As the festive season draws near, we are already planning the supply of Christmas Hampers to those in need. All help is welcomed, and we will be holding street collections in Hurstpierpoint on **11th December**, followed by Hassocks on the **18th December**. Please give generously, every penny raised goes to good causes as we have no overheads. Sussex Vale also sponsors the Memory Moments Café in Hurstpierpoint with the support of Know Dementia. It meets on the first Thursday of the month at the Court Bush Centre, between 2 pm and 4 pm and we need volunteers to help with the general running of the café. If you think you can help for a couple of hours one day a month, please email [secretarysvr@gmail.com](mailto:secretarysvr@gmail.com). Our community needs your help to continue to develop a supportive and friendly environment for all the local residents, so if you want to become involved in this, why not consider having a look at what Sussex Vale Rotary offers? We meet fortnightly in The Greyhound, Keymer, in a relaxed and friendly environment, so if you are interested in learning more about Rotary and how you can help or join us, please contact our club secretary on [secretarysvr@gmail.com](mailto:secretarysvr@gmail.com), or ask in the Greyhound for the next meeting date.

*Duncan Honeyman*

## MATHS TUITION

One to One, Small Group or Online

Year 3 to GCSE Foundation, as well as general primary

catch up in phonics & handwriting development

References Available • Current DBS

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### UNITED REFORMED CHURCH CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH - GREEN LIGHT FOR GO!

For anyone on their own or why not come with a friend. A list for names will be on the Church Notice Board or telephone me evenings on **01273 845770**.

Any helpers from 2019 please help again and get in touch with me greatly appreciated Max number is 30 guests plus volunteers.

Hope to hear from you.

*Rita*

### REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE 14th November.

The annual parade will leave at 2.30 pm from outside the RBL Woodland Road Hassocks. The act of remembrance will be held at 3 pm at Keymer War Memorial followed by a service in Keymer Church. For more information please contact Rev. Alex Baxter on **01273 845894**.

*Judy Jenner*

### 1ST HASSOCKS SCOUT GROUP - CHRISTMAS POST

The scouts are happy to offer a delivery service for local Christmas cards again this year, in the hope to raise funds for the local group. For just over half the price of a second class stamp for each card, we hope to beat the £317 made last year.

There will be 6 Collection boxes located at QD Stationery, Marchants Estate Agents, Age Concern, Hassocks Eye Care, Hassocks Hardware and Hassocks Pet Shop.

The service will start from Light Up Hassocks on Friday **3rd December** with the last collection at 4 pm on Friday **17th December**.

*Lisa Sendall*

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## CHRISTMAS MENU 2021

### ~~ STARTERS ~~

#### **Pate of the Day**

*mixed leaves & melba toast*

#### **Rosemary and Garlic Breaded Brie**

*mixed leaves & cranberry dip*

#### **Lightly Dusted Calamari**

*mixed leaves & sweet chilli dip*

**Cream of Tomato & Basil Soup** (Vegan option avail.) *roll & butter*

**Prawn Cocktail** *mixed leaves, bread & butter*

### ~~ MAINS ~~

*all served with fresh vegetables & roast potatoes*

**Roast Turkey** *in a rich gravy*

**Roast Beef** *in a rich gravy*

**Nut Roast (Vegetarian)** *in a rich gravy*

**Lamb Shank** *in a red wine and rosemary sauce (£2 extra)*

**Carrot and Cashew Wellington (Vegan)** *with spiced carrot marmalade*

**Salmon** *in a lemon and dill sauce*

### ~~ DESSERTS ~~

**Christmas Pudding** *with custard*

**Strawberry and Champagne cheesecake** *with cream*

**Rich Chocolate Torte** *with cream*

**Mixed Sorbet**

**Cheese and Biscuits** (£2 extra)

**Coffee & Mince Pies to follow**

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**(2 Courses - Main and Dessert £19.50) 1st Nov - 22nd Dec 2021.**

All dinners must be ordered in advance.

Please advise us of any dietary requirements.

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Menu choice needed 7 days before the event.



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**AGE CONCERN** Dale Avenue, Hassocks. Main office **01273 844461** [www.achassocks.co.uk](http://www.achassocks.co.uk)

From our Chairman - Thank you to our supporters!

The Trustees and staff at Age Concern very much appreciate the support we have had from local people over the past 18 months. Of particular note are stalwarts who have started to enjoy our weekday lunches again. Thank you too, the residents who back on to our premises, who kept a close eye on the site during lockdown and have even looked after our garden, so that we had one to come back to. Also of note are the many who have donated such wonderful items for our charity shop, and the customers who have browsed and bought, helping to raise much needed funds. Thank you so much!

We have a building to maintain as well as services for the older people of this area and we are currently spending twice as much as we are earning, so every donation really counts. If anyone would like to help by organising a fundraising event for us on our premises or elsewhere then please get in touch.

We are creeping back to normality, serving freshly cooked meals every weekday and we take safety very seriously with masks worn in public areas. Some of our regulars are still reluctant to visit while there are still risks being within a confined space, whether that is our Dining Room, Charity Shop or on our minibus

bringing members to the Centre.

We hope that numbers will improve over time and our usual Christmas events and lunches may be a spur for many. We are considering increasing the number of days we bring people to lunch on the minibus, but still need more volunteers to occasionally drive or act as an escort on the bus. If you are interested, please give us a call and we will explain what is involved.

Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove (WSBH) is urging local knitters to support older people in the area to create miniature hats for the innocent Big Knit campaign. Each hat collected to adorn innocent smoothie bottles raises 25p for the charity, directly supporting its work with some of the most vulnerable people locally.

Would you like to help and need something to keep you occupied during the coming winter months? Knitting patterns available at Age Concern or use this link to print off any patterns and find out more information. Any hats made you can drop them to us here at Age Concern.

**[www.thebigknit.co.uk/knitting-patterns](http://www.thebigknit.co.uk/knitting-patterns)**

Lunches - We serve lunches weekdays in our dining room - Brunch served on a Monday between 10 am and 1 pm as well as sandwiches, paninis, soups, and cakes available. Afternoon Cream Tea boxes to take away with two scones, cream and jam are available

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Activities – Art Group Tuesday mornings, Canasta Thursday afternoon, Hairdresser and Chiropody here Mon – Thur. Table Tennis Table available.

New Class – Gentle Chair Yoga Friday mornings 11.30 am – why not pop in for coffee before or stay for lunch after.

Can you help us? Volunteering opportunities to help drive our bus- We are looking for drivers and escorts to expand our daily pick-up runs, please do call the office for more information, or come in and see us.

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We are also looking for a Saturday morning volunteer to help in our coffee shop, this can be once a month on a rota system to take orders including payments for refreshments. Do call us or pop in and see us. We look forward to welcoming you.

*All at Age Concern*

*We thank Pam Worthington-Williams (nee Clark) for the following letter:-* I received my October issue of the Talk About yesterday, and took it to show my parents, who are both in their nineties and were born and brought up in Hurstpierpoint, and lived there until 1980 when we all moved to west Wales. I showed them the photograph on page 1 sent in by Michael Alford, and my father (David Clark) thinks it was known as The Roundhouse, and was on the A23 between The King's Head and Muddleswood crossroads, on the left hand side if you're heading south towards Brighton.

We were all also interested in the photographs and item about the Clark family in the previous issue, and the mention of Clark's Corner. We lived next door to the fire station in Cuckfield Road opposite Clark's Corner from 1962 until 1980, but never knew it as Clark's Corner. My father tells me that the Clark family were not related to us.

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Je t'aime, je t'adore

Counting kisses five by five  
It's great to be alive

Counting kisses six by six  
It's just like 'pick and mix'

Counting kisses seven by seven  
This is joy, this is heaven

Counting kisses eight by eight  
I'm your beau, you're my mate

Counting kisses nine by nine  
So gorgeous and so divine

Counting kisses ten by ten  
Let's go around again and again

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### THE BEACON PARISH OF DITCHLING, STREAT & WESTMESTON

We enjoyed taking part in the autumnal Apple Day held early in October. By the time you read this we'll be looking forward to the season of Advent and to welcoming back Fr. David. Our Holy Communion Services for November at St. Margaret's Ditchling will be at 10 am on the **7th, 21st and 28th November.**

On Remembrance Sunday, **14th November**, Holy Communion will take place at St. Margaret's at 9.30 am. This service will be followed by the Act of Remembrance at Ditchling War Memorial where we will start to gather from 10.45 am for 11 am. Following the Act of Remembrance, we will move into St. Margaret's Church for the Remembrance Sunday Service. There will also be a service taking place at Streat Church where we will start to gather at 10.45 am by the War Memorial in the South Churchyard for the Act of Remembrance and then move into the church for the Remembrance Sunday Service.

*Sherrian Guest*

### HASSOCKS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY On **10th November**

we will meet at Adastra Hall, Hassocks, at 8 pm. This meeting will be the AGM followed by 'The Work of Medecins Sans Frontiers' an illustrated talk by Pam O'Brien.

*Pat Ticehurst*

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**CURTAIN UP** Firstly, on behalf of the Ditchling Players, I would like to thank those of you that supported our Alfresco Evening of Coward & Cole at Downlands School at the end of July, it was good to see so many people in the audiences and your applause and feedback after the show certainly made all our efforts worthwhile, so thank you.

Now on to our next production - Private Lives by Noel Coward - which we'll be performing at Ditchling Village Hall from **Tuesday 23rd to Saturday 27th November**. For anyone not familiar with the play it revolves around Elyot and Amanda who have been divorced for five years. Glamorous Amanda and her new husband are honeymooning on the French Riviera, when she finds that, quite by chance, the hotel room next to theirs is occupied by her ex-husband, the rich and reckless Elyot, and his new wife! Old passions begin to bubble between them and, with no regard for propriety, they soon forget the many

good reasons why they broke up in the first place. But can it last, or will they find that their passion, drives them apart yet again? With its stinging barbs and clever wit, this is Noël Coward's finest and funniest comedy. Without spoiling your enjoyment, we will, of course, be complying with the Covid restrictions in place at the Village Hall as well as monitoring the situation as we move towards the First Night. There are also a couple of changes that we will be introducing. The performances will start at 7.30 pm instead of 8 pm and, as the capacity in the Hall is being reduced from our usual maximum,

we've taken the decision to extend the performances to 5 nights instead of the usual 4.

We're also pleased to say that the White Horse Inn are offering pre-theatre dining with two or three delicious courses. So, you can relax and enjoy the historic surroundings whilst their team ensure that your meal is served in time for you get to the show. The White Horse is on West Street, Ditchling - an easy five-minute walk from Village Hall - and advance booking is essential. Reservations can be made by calling **01273 842006**.

So, forget all the gloom of the past year and come and join us in the sophisticated world of cocktails, elegant glamour and sparkling repartee. Tickets are on sale now and can be obtained from the usual places - either online at [www.ditchlingplayers.org.uk](http://www.ditchlingplayers.org.uk), through our Facebook page, or in person at the White Horse Inn. We look forward to seeing you there.

David Tetttersell



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### RECYCLE THOSE UNWANTED ITEMS FOR 4SIGHT VISION SUPPORT!

4Sight Vision Support is sending out a call to encourage donations of recyclables and unwanted items to help raise money for its specialist services for blind and sight impaired adults and children across West Sussex. The charity has just announced additional ways to lend your support through recycling, while doing your bit for the environment too!

The recycling scheme includes small items like stamps from everyday post or stamp collections; old or foreign coins; ink cartridges (except laser toner cartridges); and mobile phones including old or broken ones. It also covers cheese packets which are generally not suitable for your household recycling bin, and which would otherwise go to landfill – you can include the plastic pouch from blocks or grated cheese, the plastic wrapper from sliced cheese and even mini-cheese nets. But please remember to wash them first!

And if you want to recycle a larger item – 4Sight Vision Support would love to have your old car! It has the resources to turn old cars into cash via auction or scrap.

If you would like to save any of these items, they can be dropped off at the charity's Head Office in Victoria Drive, Bognor Regis during normal office hours. If you require further details or would like a freepost recy-

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cling envelope posted out to you, please call the Fundraising Team on **01243 828555** or visit **www.4sight.org.uk**.  
*Cathy*

**HASSOCKS WI NEWS.** We are once again meeting in person at Adastra Hall at 7.45 pm on 3rd Monday of the month. Please come along.

September – we enjoyed informative, interesting talk, demonstrations, CPR, defibrillator from First Responder – Nikki McIvor.

An outing to Towner Eastbourne with a tour of the Art Store, current exhibition John Nash was so popular, we are going again – come along.

Next meeting – October AGM and social. Help us finalise an exciting, programme for next year. All ideas welcome.

Theatre trips, craft events all planned – Come along.

*Gerry*

### MID DOWNLANDS PARISH CHRISTMAS

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*Karen Lewis*



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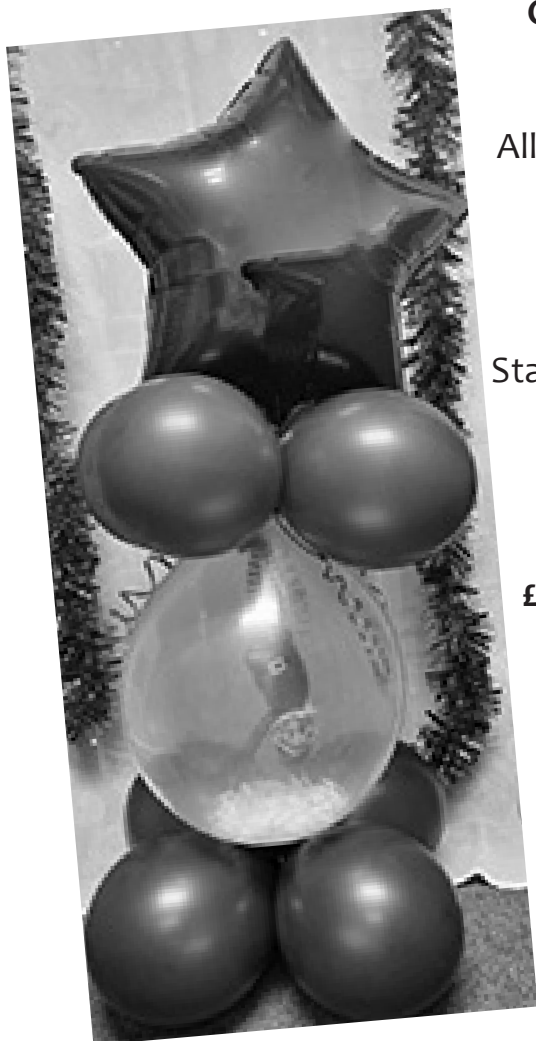
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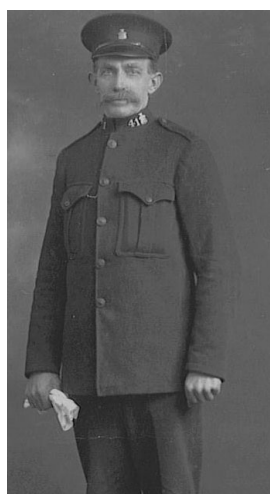
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*We thank Shirley Greenhalgh for the following letter:-* Further to the interest in the past Hassocks Shops, made me think of all the past local growers.

My Grandfather Walter Russell retired from the Police Force in 1928, when he bought a plot of land from Edwin Powell (of Sandy Lane Nursery, Brighton Road) on which he built his own bungalow 'Luearn' (the name from 1st 2 letters of Lucy his wife's name and Earn

as it was built from his earnings).

He leased some land nearby from Danny Estate to



start a Market Garden for himself, son George and later grandson Gerald.

Following is a list of Market Gardens and Nurseries that I can remember.

Brighton Road Hassocks – Edwin Powell and son David (Sandy Lane). Walter Russell later W Russell and Sons (Stonepound Nursery). Allwoods, Carnation Growers.

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London Road Hassocks – Mill Nursery.

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Orchard Lane, Hassocks – Joe? Anthony

Albourne – Hazeldens

Brighton Road, Hurstpierpoint - Geers.

Cuckfield Road, Hurstpierpoint - Ike Anthony.

College Lane, Hurstpierpoint - A Sayers and Son.

Hudsons. Mr Denyer. Goodwins.

Beacon Road, Ditchling – Budds.

Spatham Lane, Ditchling – Bob Webb. Wrattens.

Mullers Mr Blackburn?

Also there were Strawberry Growers and Apple Orchards but can't remember the names.

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### HURSTPIERPOINT FAMILY BONFIRE & FIREWORKS

- As announced earlier, we consulted with our main partners in this event and took the reluctant decision to postpone the next Bonfire event to 5th November 2022.

Hurstpierpoint Christmas Fair - with the rising rate of covid infections, we have taken the decision to cancel this year's Christmas Fair in the Village Centre. We hope that this will be restored to our calendar in 2022.

*Andrew*

### HURSTPIERPOINT HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Our first meeting since February 2020 was held at Hurstpierpoint Guide HQ on Friday 1st October with a presentation called "What is Landscape" by that very popular speaker, Dr Geoffrey Meads. It was good to see so many members, and some new faces.

Our next meeting will be on Friday **29th October** starting at 8 pm with an illustrated talk called "Wiston Estate - 1000 years of history" by Janet Pennington.

There will be further presentations, "The Anglo Saxons" by Mak Norman on **26th November** and "Sussex Shepherds" by Ian Everest on **28th January** 2022. Or contact me - telephone **01273 832280**, e-mail **w.kent123@btinternet.com** for further information about our very friendly society. New members always welcome.

*Bill Kent*

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## THE MONDAY GROUP OF FOOTPATH WORKERS IS NOW 60 YEARS OLD

In early 1961 I was invited to a meeting in the house of Jean Ellis who was the Chairman of Ditchling Parish Council.

Assembled in her house at North End I found a group of senior Ditchling ladies and one very elderly man. I didn't know any of them as I was not a Ditchling resident.

The purpose of the meeting was to consider setting up a Footpath Society to work to open the many unusable paths leading from Ditchling village.

Owing to decades of neglect and wartime closure due to D.O.R.A. many paths were in effect, closed to the public.

A footpaths committee was formed, and I was designated chairman. All other members, about 6, were senior Ladies of Ditchling.

At the first committee meeting a priority list of paths to be worked on was arranged. Top of the list was the path passing through North End Farm (now the Turner-Dumbrell workshops) and on to the grazing fields to the east. This was the route chosen by the Senior Ladies of Ditchling to exercise their dogs.

It was also the route chosen by the cows to move twice a day from field to farmyard for milking. It was of course, just beyond the farmyard very muddy for most of the year. Most of the committee ladies did not possess a pair of wellington boots.

The Committee asked me to install a hard surface pathway through the mud. This was not my idea of a country footpath, but I was relaxed because I knew that I could not do the work and certainly the Senior Ladies would not be able to help.

I knew that the task required concrete and thus a lot of arduous mixing – something that I too am not suitable for.

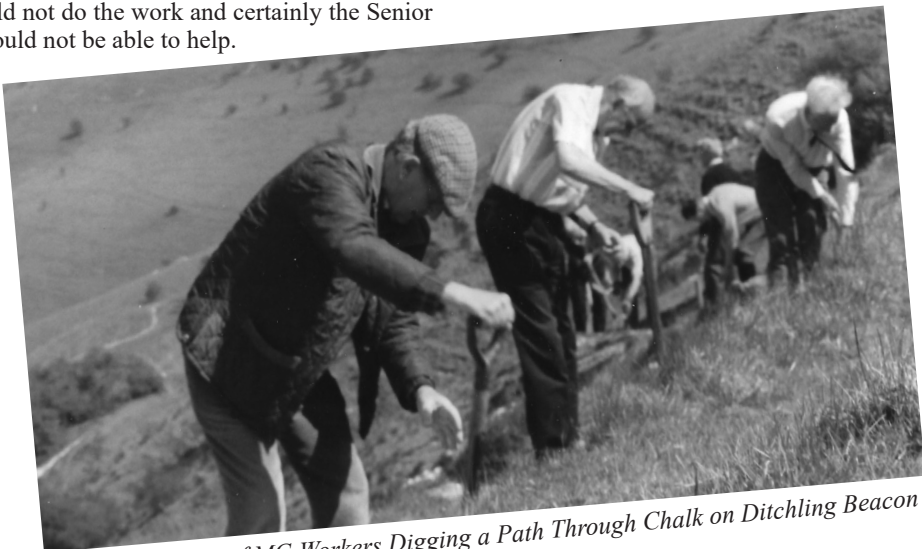
To my dismay the committee ladies dismissed my objections and three of them offered their husbands to assist in the work. I had never met the three husbands, but I learned that they were all retired and thus elderly – like their wives.

But I conceded defeat. I was a relatively young man and had to accept the decision of the Senior Ditchling Ladies. I am soft-hearted really.

But I am also a realist, so I ordered several cubic yards (no metres in those days) in a Ready-Mix rotating drum truck.

I gave the 3 committee ladies details of the work plan for Saturday 2 weeks ahead. Start at 9am to construct the formwork ready for the arrival of the Ready-Mix lorry at 10am.

Saturday dawned a bright and clear August day and I started work at 9am. No Husbands yet. At 9.30am still no Husbands so I pressed on. I had no alternative. I did not know where the missing Husbands lived. No mobile phones in those days. Promptly at 10am the Ready-Mix lorry arrived and discharged the cubic yards of wet concrete in North End farmyard. I still hoped that the 3 missing Husbands would appear, and I set to work barrowing the concrete and laying it and levelling it in the formwork. The concrete started to show signs of initial set, so I added more water.



*An Early Picture of MG Workers Digging a Path Through Chalk on Ditchling Beacon*

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It was hard work and progress was slow, but I had no alternative. I had no husband helpers nor a single mug of anything to drink.

By 12 o'clock I had laid less than half of the ever-hardening concrete.

Then my fortune changed. A young walker from Brighton appeared on his way to Plumpton "Do you need any help?" he said. Together we set to and although he was small and slim my new helper was a strong worker.

By 3 o'clock the concrete path from the farmyard was laid and setting fast – aided by copious additions of water.

The walker continued on his way with many thanks. The Missing Husbands did not appear at all and neither did the Committee ladies.

I was knackered but satisfied with the finished pathway.

That evening, aided by two drinks (G&Ts) I reflected on the proceedings of the day. I could not be cross with the 3 missing Husbands as I had not had any direct contact with them.

I could not be cross with the 3 Elderly Lady Committee members as this would be unacceptable in Ditchling especially from a young man and just a resident of Westmeston.



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Instead, I had a very satisfying sense of achievement – the first footpath improvement of the new Footpaths Society.

Most important of all my thoughts was the realisation that I would have to separate footpath work and form my own worker group.

So started the small group which slowly grew in number and was named The Monday Group.

Nothing was revealed about the Mystery of the Three Missing Husbands. The subject was not mentioned at subsequent committee meetings, and I was not thanked.

Thus, the true generation of The Monday Group lies with The Mystery of The Three missing Husbands.

On the Sunday evening after the laying, I removed the barriers on the newly laid concrete. On the Monday mornings milking the cows came in from the fields and found to their pleasure that they no longer had to plough through mud in order to reach the milking shed. After milking the cows in single file trod the concrete and relieved themselves of copious cow droppings.

When I returned the following Saturday to inspect the concrete pathway, I found it almost covered with mud plus droppings. Before long the path disappeared altogether.

The Footpaths Society split into two separate organisations. The Footpaths Conservation Society for walkers and The Monday Group for workers. (Their later names).

For most of the past 60 years The Monday Group has operated without a formal structure or appointed officials. Monday Group workers concentrated their efforts on stiles and clearance.

We now have a proper structure and elected officers including two Hons. But our footpath work continues without being affected.

*Harold Rowling MBE,  
Founder of The Monday Group*

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Our services include activities such as befriending (either through visits or by phone) escorted shopping, shopping for the housebound, local transport, light help around the home, minor household repairs and small gardening jobs. All our services are free though donations are appreciated.

We are currently keen to recruit more volunteers. The kind of skills that volunteers need are friendliness, kindness and patience, enjoyment of other people's company, willingness to give some time and ability to drive (though this isn't essential). Some volunteers offer an hour a week, others volunteer several times a week. Some volunteers do driving only i.e. taking clients to hospital and doctors appointments, other volunteers just shop for clients. Some volunteers wish



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only to do befriending, either through meeting for a cup of tea or via the phone.

We ask anyone interested in becoming a volunteer to contact us by phoning **07876 066 368** or by emailing **neighbourlycare@outlook.com**. A committee member will then make contact to discuss the role. Anyone wishing to become a volunteer with Neighbourly Care will be asked to complete a DBS check, complete some paperwork and undertake a brief induction into how we help the community.

Our website is **[www.neighbourlycare.co.uk](http://www.neighbourlycare.co.uk)**

*Chris Newton*

### **HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL – COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME 2021/22**

Just a reminder that the deadline for the second submission of applications for Hassocks Parish Council Grants is Friday **28th January 2022** for consideration by Council in February. The Council welcomes applications from local community groups or for projects and activities that will benefit local residents.

Full details can be found on the Parish Council's website – **[www.hassocks-pc.gov.uk](http://www.hassocks-pc.gov.uk)** or for further information please contact the Parish Council Office **01273 842714** or email **[info@hassocks-pc.gov.uk](mailto:info@hassocks-pc.gov.uk)**.

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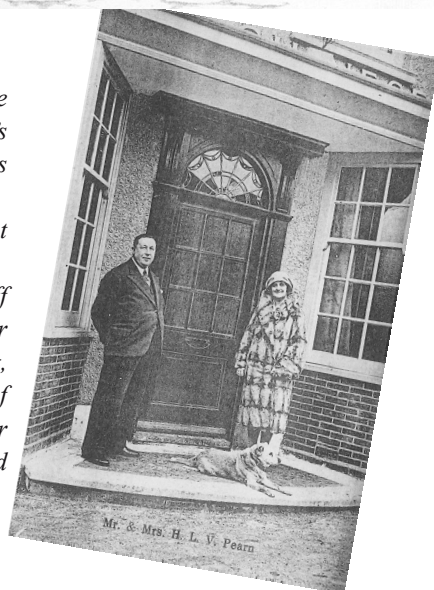
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We thank Dave Evans for this picture taken outside the Chinese Gardens Public House somewhere between the 1930's and 1940's on a trip to Goodwood Races on a Friday:- I have a load of names in the picture, but can anyone tell me who is who?

Email [ed@villagemagazines.co.uk](mailto:ed@villagemagazines.co.uk), write to us info on inside front cover or pop into QD Stationery in Hassocks.

Pictured: (L-R I think) Alf Gander; David Richardson, Cliff Rollings (Driver), Charley Gander, Mrs Lewry, Brummie Miller and wife, George Lewry and wife, Robin Brown and Mrs King, Miss Dancey, Boysie Pearn and wife (Landlord and Landlady of the Chinese Gardens Public House), Mr Newman and wife, Mr Rigson and wife, Bert ??, Charley Barker, Charly Jennings and Bill Godley.





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**THE WINDMILLS JUNIOR SCHOOL** We are really excited to be back and opening up the school further, within the new guidelines.

The children have settled in brilliantly and are enjoying their topics:

Year 3 – ‘Why Settle Here?’ Learning is built around the theme of settlement and exploring the basic nature of Stone Age settlement as well as considering settlements much closer to home.

Year 4 – ‘Wealth and Water’ Children will focus on the four key historical concepts of wealth and poverty, monarchy and democracy in the context of Ancient Egypt;

Year 5 – ‘Raiders to Rulers’ Exploring the Vikings influence on us; and

Year 6 – ‘Entertainment and Endurance’ Children will learn about leisure and entertainment at the turn of the century and study explorer Ernest Shackleton.

The children are loving playing with other children across whole year groups, which is something they had not been able to do under last year’s restrictions. The school will look to extend the well-being area and provide children with opportunities to explore the outdoor learning environment.

Year 6 have started their 10 week Tenor Horn programme, which aims to inspire children to take up an

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orchestral instrument.

Year 4 have started swimming lessons at The Triangle and they are loving the adventure of getting on a coach and being physically active.

After school football training for year 5 & 6 has started with a huge positive response!

Reading remains a focus and we are delighted to have secured a virtual visit from author Jack Meggitt-Phillips. Children will be joining him for an interactive, virtual event to celebrate the release of his latest book ‘The Beast and the Bethany: Revenge of the Beast’.

*Sarah Jacobs*

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Any kitchen project starts with intelligent and thoughtful design. Every kitchen space is different and every client has different requirements. I started my cabinet making career designing the interior of boats. It taught me how to utilise space. Many kitchen designs try to accommodate your storage needs with more cupboards but I believe intelligent design is actually the opposite. We are master drawer makers. A well-designed set of drawers is three times more space effective than a basic cupboard. Larders, if you have room are brilliant. Islands are also wonderful ...if you have the room. We now specialise in small and micro kitchen spaces. We are masters of making space accessible.

Large kitchens are much easier. The main problem in a large kitchen [strangely] is where to put that huge fridge freezer. That's my second design secret. How to make a functional kitchen look uncluttered and aesthetically charming. It's usually a bit of a compromise.

We do lots of simple makeovers where we just change the doors and perhaps fit drawers under the worksurfaces. Sometimes we change the worktops sometimes we don't. Everyone has some kind of budget so we work very hard to try and achieve the best result within your budget. By the time I have finished my first design visit I have usually scribbled a few alternative plans...and given you a fairly clear idea of the costs...then I just leave it for you to mull over at your leisure.

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**DITCHLING VILLAGE ORCHARD** had it's 7th apple Day on Sunday 3rd October. The rain poured down the day before but on the day the sun shone for us, what a relief.

We had a great turn out. The Apple Pressing tent was busy all day. Hot drinks and donated cakes were extremely popular. The bar provided by Wildflower Tipis (Weddings and Events) was very busy and thanks to them and to John at the White Horse for his generosity in donating Harveys and cider. Bangs Food Truck provided delicious food for us for the first time, and we hope they'll be back next year. Children wielded power drills to build bird boxes helped by our HKD Transition group. The smoothie bike whirled along throughout with delicious healthy fruits for the children to choose from.

The following organisations provided wonderful activities and produce for sale: The guides, PTA, Scouts, Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft, DVA, St Margaret's Church, Charlie's Chestnut Products, Lock-down Crafts, Hedgehog Haven, Monday Group,

Brighton Steiner School. Thanks to all the musicians from the White Horse session who turned out to help the day along.

South Downs Refugee Project attracted a lot of interest as they raise money to host a refugee family, with local support. They have nearly reached their target and now need a generous landlord to offer accommodation for a year or two, for which they will receive a guaranteed reasonable rent. The Home Office will then offer us a refugee family knowing they will be supported by our local community.

Back to the ridiculous and highly competitive Welly Wanging competition, open to all ages and always oversubscribed. Finally, the Ditchling Morris danced for us and led a procession, accompanied by a strange and wonderful hobby horse, to end the day at Ditchling Orchard in Boddingtons Lane.

Many many thanks to all those who helped us with this day. It wouldn't happen without you.

*Ditchling Village Orchard*

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**NEWS FROM STONEYWISH** a few days ago, Michael came in from his morning's work with a long face. The handle of his beloved bill-hook had broken and disappeared into the twig heap of a dead ash tree which he and his helper, Robert, had been cutting up. Michael was wielding the chainsaw; Robert was reducing the smaller branches with the wide bladed bill-hook. The worn wooden handle had finally given out, but the loss is felt like the loss of an old friend, not to be compensated for by any new axe, however smart its DayGlo fibreglass handle. The old bill-hook was forged by hand and designed by someone who knew how to hedge and ditch. It sat snug in the hand and never slipped or rubbed, never failed till now. I wonder about the practicalities of making a new handle. Ironically, tool handles were traditionally made of ash wood, for ash is flexible and strong and resistant to splitting. This idea leads me into a reverie on ash trees in general and the fate of man.

Here we are, regretfully felling ash trees and cutting out of our landscape and cultural memory of one of the most precious species known to us. Ash trees and humans have been bound together by bonds of mutual support for as long as history can show. Humans planted, regenerated, and venerated ash trees and they in turn gave wood for practical use: spears and shields for warriors, cart axles, boat oars and thumbsticks for travellers, firewood for cottagers, fodder for the farm animals, medicine for the sick. But the tree was also believed to be a sacred repository of wisdom and in Old Norse, as Yggdrasil, the Tree of Life, it was revered as a metaphor for the earthly existence. This 'World Tree' had its roots in the Underworld, (the past), its branches in Heaven (the future), and its trunk in Middle Earth, (our human present). A sacred squirrel scampered up

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and down, carrying messages from one plane of existence to the other. The ash trunk, providing this vital link to other worlds, became celebrated in time the maypole - always made of ash - a symbol of life and fertility. As we approach Hallowe'en it might be relevant to note that the witches' broomsticks were also made of ash and were supposed to fly through the air, just like Saxon spears, winging between the worlds of the living and the dead. The wisdom of the ash tree - the secrets of life - might be unlocked (think of ask keys) by serious seekers. The Norse God, Odin was one. But the tree, in its majesty and beauty, has a message for all of us, even in its present plight.

Two nights ago, one of our mature ash trees snapped in the wind, a victim perhaps of ash die-back, which is emptying our countryside of the species with such devastating speed. Nobody wants to be squashed by a falling branch, so the cull is on and of course it's a gold-rush for loggers. But I must confess to feeling alarmed by the surgical zeal which condemns a tree at the first

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sign of infection. I hear with dismay conservationist friends passing sentence of death on healthy young saplings as though they were all agents of contagion which must be removed. The nationwide cull of elm trees years ago was catastrophic enough, for the elm-suckers which survived all still regenerating, biding their time to gain the upper hand against the disease which affects them. Ash trees, surely, also need time, as do all the other species which depend upon them and as do we, if we are to preserve any memory of the secrets, they can confide to us. It seems to me that the secret of the ash tree is that it is a connector, providing pathways and binding together communities, from soil dwellers to winged creatures - from woodsman to craftsman, warrior, and wise woman, all who have historically woven society together.

In nature, health and strength come from connection, community and the free flow and exchange of vital information. Isolation, detachment, containment spell the beginning of the end - expulsion from the magic garden.

When we look into the lattice of branches and leaves or touch grey trunk of an ash tree, we cannot help sensing the resonating life force they exude. We are connected to something deep and timeless within ourselves, something we surely need in order to be properly human.

How then can it be that these life-givers are dying? They have survived thousands of years of evolution and climate change. Their immune systems have proved a match for insect and fungal attack, they have resisted competition and predation and always grown back stronger than before. Are they victims of that modern ailment 'stress'? The relentless grubbing up and churning over of the environment which we human termites are so proficient at? Or are they being poisoned by dirty old pollutants, or clean, new ones? Or can a tree, like a person, simply die of loneliness and despair, being unable to hear brother trees rustling, or birds singing, or even the hum of insects, for the microwave buzz now clogging the air? Before we consign our white ash trees off to oblivion as that collateral damage in the service of progress, perhaps we should try treasuring them once more with the love we rightly owe them. Perhaps, if nothing else, that would open up a pathway to deeper and more vibrant levels of life for ourselves...

At which point I'll go and find a spare log and my whittling knife and make that new bill-hook handle, for nothing in nature is thrown away... ever!

Meanwhile I wish you the blessings of autumn, scuffing leaves, toasting crumpets, and drawing the curtains against a howling gale.

*Rosemary*

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**HURST MONTHLY SOCIAL GROUP** meets 1st Wednesday of each month, from 2 to 4 pm at The Guide HQ, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint.

Our next meeting is on the **3rd November** where Carol Rowe, from Bennett Oakley Solicitors, will be giving a light hearted talk on the importance of Wills, Probate and Power of Attorney. This should be very interesting - just recently, due to the illness of a close family member, I realised the importance of Powers of Attorney and the benefit of looking into it way before they are needed to be put in place.

New members are most welcome.

Contact me on **07806 670359** or Dianne on **01273 835284** for more information. *Ann Tranter*

**BURGESS HILL DISTRICT LIONS** has won an award for its work internationally in support of the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) for 2020-2021. The LCIF supports critical humanitarian needs in 208 countries and other areas around the world. They fund initiatives as diverse as the communities being served. Lion President Ken Saunders commented 'our funding will assist in providing vaccinations to children in the developing world and disaster assistance when required. Where there is a need,



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there is a Lion.'

The club gave £2,800 to Lions International for their relief work around the globe for that period as well as giving grants of £41,200 to local groups and charities. In a normal year they also would have been helping in the community, but the pandemic precluded this. Lion President Ken said, 'we are looking forward to providing help in the community as things get back to normal and we are actively looking for more community minded people to join us.' Further details can be found on the Burgess Hill District Lions Website [www.bhdlions.co.uk](http://www.bhdlions.co.uk). *Colin Holden*



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**SATURDAY MORNING SINGING CLUB** On Saturday **20th November** at 10 am, Mike Reinstein will be hosting a singing session for children aged 4 to 7 years at the United Reform Church, Keymer Road. The session will last for 45 minutes this is not a free event, but all money taken donated to the South Downs Refugee Project.

To book your child's place, please write to Mike on [zaydeh@btopenworld.com](mailto:zaydeh@btopenworld.com)

I have been singing with children in schools since 1995. When I moved to Hassocks in 2006, I worked in Primary Schools across Brighton and West Sussex. I have also recorded five albums of original children's songs all available from my website:

[www.mikereinstein.co.uk](http://www.mikereinstein.co.uk) or from

[www.mikereinstein.bandcamp.com](http://www.mikereinstein.bandcamp.com)

The South Downs Refugee Project is based in Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint, Keymer and Ditchling and is committed to welcoming a refugee family to our community. The project is made up of a group of volunteers who are raising funds to cover the family's resettlement here. For more information about the project and how you could get involved, please go to

<https://southdownsrefugeeproject.org>.

*Mike Reinstein*



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**THE ACORNS** A wonderful new job is on offer at The Acorns Nursery and Forest School at Westmeston Parish Hall starting in November. The Acorns welcomes children from 2 - 8 years and encompasses not only the nursery school, but also 'Stay and Play' sessions for parents and little ones and Forest School sessions for home-educated children and those looking for blended learning. If you are interested and would like to know more, please contact us.

We are really enjoying the Autumn Term. We celebrated Harvest Festival both at Westmeston and Lindfield. The Westmeston children visited the church to admire the wonderful harvest display and donated some produce too. Now we are busy collecting conkers and pinecones ready for making our special Christmas decorations. This year we have been ranked in the Top 20 small nursery groups in the UK by [daynurseries.co.uk](http://daynurseries.co.uk)

A big thank you to all our supportive parents and well done to our outstanding Acorns team. For full details of the job and all our activities [theacornsnurseryandforestschoo.com](http://theacornsnurseryandforestschoo.com)

email [janetirwin@janetirwin.com](mailto:janetirwin@janetirwin.com) or phone **01444 455081**.

*Janet Irwin*

**HASSOCKS TOWNSWOMENS GUILD** It was good to see members again at our last meeting, to discuss the future of the Guild, I'm pleased to say the meeting was well attended and our next will be on **23rd November** at Age Concern centre at 2.30 pm. Look forward to seeing you all then.

*Sheila Southwell*

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## THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – DITCH- LING & DISTRICT BRANCH:

We are looking forward to holding our Remembrance Parade on Sunday **14th November**. Mr Colin Marshall, Branch Standard Bearer, will lead the Parade, with the Burgess Hill Marching Youth band playing for us. As usual we will gather at the Scout Hut in East End Lane to march off at approximately 10.40 am to gather at the War Memorial for the Act of Remembrance at 11 am. In addition to the Brownies, Beavers, Cubs, and Scouts, we are delighted that Ditchling Girl Guides have reformed and will also be marching with us. This will be followed by the Remembrance Sunday service in St Margaret's Church.

Streat Church will also be holding a Remembrance Service. There will be a gathering at the War Memorial in the new Churchyard at Streat for their Act of Remembrance at 11 am followed by the Remembrance service in Streat Church.

If you would like further information please contact me RBL Poppy Appeal Organiser on **01273 845319**.

*Margaret Bovill*



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To honour my mother's legacy, a fundraising appeal for a permanent memorial statue has been launched - but with £1.5m required to make this a reality, we need your help.

The plan is for the memorial to be erected in a specially created area on the Western Heights of the famous White Cliffs of Dover and is intended to serve as a reminder of my mother's enduring legacy for future generations.

Please take a few moments to visit the website below, and we would be immensely grateful if you could support our campaign.

[www.dameveralynnmemorialstatue.co.uk](http://www.dameveralynnmemorialstatue.co.uk)

Thank you.

*Virginia Lewis-Jones*

## BURGESS HILL HERITAGE & HISTORY AS- SOCIATION

Cyprus Hall, Burgess Hill, RH15 8DX.  
On Friday **12th November**, the AGM will take place at 7.30 pm followed at 8.15 pm by a talk by Andy Thomas entitled 'Christmas a Festive History'. All welcome at the talk.

*Stephanie*

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**MINK: FASHION VICTIMS** 'The Wind in the Willows' is one of Britain's most beloved books. Yet this story of riverbank wildlife would have lost some of its charm if, in the final chapter, Kenneth Grahame had introduced a new character; a deranged American serial killer who eats his victims.

It's easy to cast American mink as the bad guys. With long, sleek bodies equipped with razor sharp teeth they're natural born killers, as vicious in water as they are on land. Part polecat, part piranha. But it was the mink's adaptation to winter and water - thick, waterproof fur - that was its downfall. Enter the real villains of this tale; the ghastly humans who craved mink fur coats and the greedy ones keen to profit from a mink massacre.

American mink were first imported to the UK in 1929. By the fifties, British mink farms were springing up everywhere, including Sussex, producing pelts at full pelt. But fur farmers had overlooked one important thing; mink were smarter than they were. Mary Potter remembers the Buxted farm; "they built the cages with ordinary wire netting. The mink made short work of that and escaped. With stronger netting, they started again with more mink, but again, the wire was no match for their teeth. After a third attempt

with stronger wire netting, they gave up and just released them."

The result of a new alien predator invading our waterways was catastrophic. Kingfishers, ducks, moorhens, fish and toads suddenly found themselves on the mink's menu and were swiftly dispatched with a Dracula-style neck bite. The worst victim was the water vole - Ratty from 'The Wind in the Willows' - which mink almost completely eradicated from Sussex.

The late (and legendary) Jim 'The Fish' Smith walked and worked the River Ouse for decades. He first encountered a mink when one cruised past him downstream on a piece of driftwood. "I had never seen a mink before and at first had no idea what it was," said Jim "but it wasn't long before we saw God knows how many along the river." During the sixties, Jim and four others were employed to trap and humanely kill mink along the Ouse. "In those days we were doing nothing else but trapping mink. We were catching 25-30 a week."

Thankfully, fashions and attitudes change. Mink farms are gone but their ferocious, furry legacy remains in our rivers. "These days you don't see that many mink, so I have to conclude that the effort we



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have put in to controlling them has been successful,” said Jim “but you’re never going to get rid of all of them.” 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 Michael Blencowe on our regular wildlife walks and also enjoy free events, discounts on wildlife courses, Wildlife magazine and our Sussex guidebook, Discovering Wildlife. It’s easy to join online at [sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/join](http://sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/join)

*Michael Blencowe*

**STAR CINEMA** The Star Cinema is back! **Friday 12th November** at the Adastra Hall. Tickets are cash only please. Doors open at 7 pm and the film starts at 7.30 pm. Wine/tea/coffee/and the ever-popular raffle will be as usual.

The film is Dreamhorse - a feelgood true story of a Welsh village that bought a racehorse, and its aspirations to win the Welsh Grand National. It stars Toni Collette, Nicholas Farrell, and Damian Lewis, with a cameo role by Sian Phillips. Hoping to see you there.

*Liz Edmunds*

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Just a line to say I’m living,  
That I’m not among the dead,  
Though I’m getting more forgetful  
And I’m mixed up in my head.

I’ve got used to the arthritis.  
To my dentures I’m resigned,  
I manage my bifocals,  
But, Oh dear, I miss my mind.

Sometimes I can’t remember  
When I’m standing on the stair  
If I should go up for something  
Or if I’ve just come back from there,

And before the fridge, so often  
My mind is filled with doubt,  
Now did I put the food away  
Or did I come to take it out?

And sometimes when it’s night-time  
With my nightcap on my head  
I don’t know if I’m retiring  
Or if I’m getting out of bed.

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## ~~~ WHAT'S ON IN NOVEMBER ~~~

**3rd** HURST MONTHLY SOCIAL GROUP Guide HQ, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, 2 pm. 'Wills, Probate & Power of Attorney' Carol Rowe. Guests welcome.

**4th** DITCHLING FILM SOCIETY Ditchling Village Hall, 7.30 pm. 'Leave No Trace'

**7th** HOLY COMMUNION St Margaret's Church, Ditchling, 10 am.

**8th** HAS SOCKS FIELD SOCIETY Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7.45 pm. 'The Messel Family at Nymans' Anthea Leaney

**9th** JAZZ LUNCH Hassocks Hotel, 12 pm, lunch included with booking call Jo 01444 235986.

**9th** HEARTS OF SUSSEX BRIDGE CLUB Age Concern, Hassocks. Children in Need Ecats Charity Duplicate. [www.hsobcbridgeclub.co.uk](http://www.hsobcbridgeclub.co.uk) 01273 844146

**10th** HAS SOCKS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY Adastra Hall, Hassocks. 8 pm. AGM followed by 'The Work of Medecins Sans Frontiers' Pam O'Brien

**12th** BURGESS HILL HERITAGE & HISTORY SOCIETY Cyprus Hall, Cyprus Road, Burgess Hill 7.30 pm. AGM followed by 'Christmas a Festive History' Andy Thomas

**12th** STAR CINEMA Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7 pm. 'Dreamhorse'. Cash only on the door.

**14th** REMEMBRANCE PARADE DITCHLING, meet East End Lane 10.40 am Act of Remembrance at War Memorial 11 am followed by a service at St Margaret's Church.

**14th** REMEMBRANCE PARADE HAS SOCKS, meet RBL Woodslan Road 2.30 pm. Act of Remembrance at War Memorial 3 pm followed by a service at St Comas and St Damian Church, Keymer.

**14th** REMEMBRANCE SERVICE STREAT, Act of Remembrance at War Memorial at 11 am followed by a service at Streat Church.

**15th** HAS SOCKS WI Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7.45 pm. Monthly meeting. Guests welcome.

**20th** SATURDAY MORNING SINGING CLUB United Reformed Church, 10 am. Free event for children aged 4 to 7. To book [Zaydeh@btopenworld.co.uk](mailto:Zaydeh@btopenworld.co.uk)

**21st** HOLY COMMUNION St Margaret's Church, Ditchling, 10 am.

**22nd** HAS SOCKS FIELD SOCIETY Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7.45 pm 'Myths & Folklore of the South Downs' Len Brooks

**23rd** HAS SOCKS TOWNSWOMEN GUILD Age Concern Hassocks 2.30 pm. Monthly meeting all welcome.

**23rd - 27th** DITCHLING PLAYERS, Ditchling Village Hall. Private Lives by Noel Coward. Tickets 01273 842006

**26th** HURSTPIERPOINT HISTORICAL & GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY Guide HQ, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, 8 pm 'The Anglo-Saxons' Mak Norman. Guests welcome.

**27th** HAS SOCKS VILLAGE MARKET National Tyres Forecourt, 9 am - 1 pm, Local produce, bread, honey, cheese, wine, veg etc.

**27th** REPAIR CAFE Hassocks URC, 10 am - 12.30 pm, bring items for repair book your slot [www.hkd-transition.org.uk](http://www.hkd-transition.org.uk)

**27th** MID DOWNLANDS PARISH CHRISTMAS FAYRE, Adastra Hall, Hassocks 11 am to 2.30 pm

**28th** HOLY COMMUNION St Margaret's Church, Ditchling, 10 am.

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*Dear Editor,* In July's edition there is a photo on the first white page of the WI in 1944, with reference to Dr Denman.

The names of the people are written below.

My aunt is standing beside Mrs Denman in the second row.

She is referred to as 'Marjory Penny' in the caption. She was actually 'MARJORIE PENNEY'

I loved the photo and remember Dr Denman, who was a great friend of my two aunts, Marjorie and Joan Penney.

*Belinda Jupp*

### **ADAstra BOWLING CLUB – HASSOCKS**

On Sunday 5th September Adastra Bowling Club held a Charity Afternoon in aid of Chestnut House Children's Hospice. The main event was a fun game of bowls, played by a total of thirty-six players, during a gloriously sunny and warm afternoon. This was followed by a cream tea, with the players being joined by wives, husbands, and former members of the club. Other fund-raising activities were a raffle stall, book sale and a bric-a-brac table with second-hand bowls wear and equipment on sale.

The total amount raised for the Hospice was £2,000 which was received by the Director of Fundraising Mrs Rebecca Jupp who, after a few words about the Hospice and how difficult it had been during the pandemic, thanked the club for their very generous donation. A fitting end to a wonderfully successful afternoon. A huge thankyou to club captain Carole for organising the event and to all those who helped.

*Frank Titford*



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## **STEVE'S BACK PAGE GOSSIP**

Mums are very special people and should never be forgotten. It's now been 28 years since my mum passed away at the early age of 72, so as a tribute to her memory here's a little bit about her life. Peggy Violet Graham was born on the 29th June 1922 at Knights Hill Hospital, South Norwood, London at approximately 4 o'clock in the afternoon. She was nick-named Peaches as her skin was so perfect - she retained her beautiful complexion right up until the day she sadly died.

Her father Stanley Whiteley Graham had been in the royal flying corps, now the RAF, and was stationed in Farnborough, Hants. Sadly, Stanley died in 1925 aged 30, of TB but just before his death, he took his daughter Peggy to the Lord Mayor Trelaws Hospital in Alton where she was diagnosed with TB contracted by cutting her hand on her father's spittoon bottle. She stayed at Trelaws hospital for three years, where she was never visited once by any of her family, even her mother was not allowed. At the age of 6 she was allowed to leave hospital and was returned home to her mother Violet Nelly Graham and older sister Irene. Mum lived most of her young life in South London and was there to witness the magnificent Crystal Palace burn down. The one thing she said she could never forget was the noise of the breaking glass, the heat of the fire made it explode. Three years later more explosions, as WWII was declared. Mum joined the RAF as a Batswoman and was stationed up at Uphaven in Wiltshire. Here she made and lost so many young friends either shot down or left with terrible injuries. She felt she couldn't stand it anymore and got a posting to Cranwell to train as a teleprinter operator. It was while at Cranwell she received news that her fiancé Johnny Lloyd Johnson a dispatch rider, had been killed delivering vital information at the invasion of Sicily. My middle name is Lloyd and this very brave gentleman is where I got it from.

The RAF then decided to post its operatives to Ceylon which is now called Sri Lanka.

Even getting to Ceylon was an adventure, coming out of port the ship lost its anchor and was unable to proceed with the rest of the fleet, so they had to make the journey alone across the Indian Ocean. However, a British sub was in the area and made sure it arrived safely, in to Colombo harbour. Mum loved her time in Ceylon and spent the rest of the war there and vowed one day to return, but sadly that vow never came true. Many years later she found her old RAF bag in a box under the stairs. In that bag was her diary which she had kept throughout the war, but had stopped on her return to England, deciding to sit down, with a cup of tea and relive a few old memories. She showed it to my father who in the war was a submariner. On reading her diary they discovered that he was part of the crew on the submarine that escorted the liner across the Indian Ocean that mum was on. Not long after that amazing discovery she read that the liner that had taken her to Ceylon the J.V.O. (Johan van Oldenbarnevelt), had been sold to a Greek shipping company and before it was to be handed over to its new owners it had to complete one last cruise under its old name. Mum wrote to the captain of the J.V.O. and amazingly had a reply from him inviting all of us to visit the ship, that was my mum and my dad, my sister and myself. I was very young, but I remember very clearly walking through the door onto the dockside and seeing this magnificent ship, it was huge, just like the old cruise liners used to look, I couldn't believe my eyes and then the captain in full uniform came to meet us and gave us a tour of the ship. We then sat down and had an amazing lunch, I've never tasted food like it, everyone was so nice and kind. For mum it held such wonderful memories - the ship she travelled halfway around the world on during such turbulent times and thinking of all the friends and colleagues, people and places she'll never see again, not because they died, but now getting on with their own lives. After that visit mum and dad decided to splash out on a Christmas cruise. They arranged for two very good friends to look after the ship for two weeks. Being a pet shop with lots of pets it had to be the right people. However a couple of weeks before Christmas the couple Mr and Mrs Brownly where involved in a serious car accident and wouldn't be able to look after the ship, so it had to be cancelled. I was heartbroken my unhappiest Christmas ever I think. The ship we should have been on, now under Greek ownership and renamed T.S.M.S. Lakonia, whilst on its Christmas cruise caught fire and sunk - that was 29th December 1963, 128 people were killed. At the time I didn't take in that poor Mr and Mrs Brownly's accident, from which they made a full recovery, probably saved our lives. Mum's ship was now gone forever, she was convinced it died of a broken heart, perhaps it did, but I do know that a broken heart is what contributed to the death of my mother.

Until next month - Steve

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