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

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We thank Dave Evans of Hurstpierpoint for this fabulous photo of Hurstpierpoint Fire Brigade:-
The photo was taken outside the Fire Station which is still based in Cuckfield Road today, opposite Clarks Corner around 1930s.

Standing by the cab is Fred Gander the Foreman. The driver is John Venn.

I believe standing up left to right is George Gaston who was uncle to Chris and George Gaston. Mr Woodward uncle to Pearce from the shoe shop in Hurstpierpoint and Reg Gander cousin of Fred Gander.

Bottom row left to right Mr Patrick whose brother used to work at The Chinese Gardens. Mr Herriot who married Miss Clark from Clarks Corner and last person I do not know.

JRH

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We thank Thomas Gee for the following letter:-
I came across December VV and Steve's gossip. At the end of Empire in the mid 60's we drove home and searched for a house which had to be within 20 miles of the new University. Few were available. Mid Sussex was in East Sussex then and a friend in Ditchling suggested we try Keymer (which was later moved by Redcliffe Maude into West Sussex). We found a cottage there. The occupants, Colonel and Mrs Knightly were building a house in Hurst. But Hassocks still had another Colonel, an ex MP who was now our county councillor-Col. Granville Sharp. He used to ride his bike in the village in shorts carrying a scythe, cut long grass, collecting litter and represented us in Chichester until I took over from him. Steve's Toucan which advertised alcohol escaped and flew into a nearby tree. The Crescent residents included Austen Albu MP and Minister, novelist Penelope Lively, Uncle Mac a BBC founder, Mr Ramsbottom who grew

tomatoes in a large Ditchling nursery, and Mrs Sandwell who had a china shop opposite Steve. Austen founded the Hassocks Amenity Association in the old Territorial galvanised Village Hall which was replaced by the present hall. Mrs Mac, also Keymer Crescent was the Secretary.

Mr Stafford's charitable giving is another sad story that can be told.

Who can remember our annual Village Fete in Adastra Park when the marine band from the Royal Yacht Britannia marched down from the Hassocks Hotel where they changed into full uniform and marched through Hassocks and played until they left for a concert in Eastbourne.

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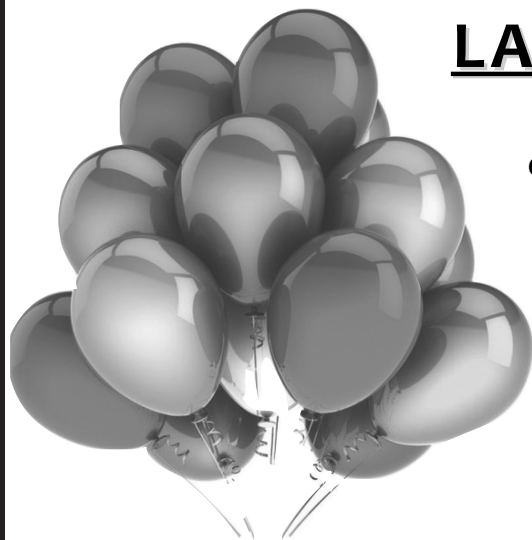

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Janet Irwin

TREFOIL GUILD Our last meeting was at Fun Pots in Haywards Heath where we all painted novelties for our Christmas trees. The December meeting was our Christmas meal at Jack and Jill Inn.

On **19th January** the Hurst Haven For Hedgehogs will be visiting us at the Guide Hall, Semley Road at 7.45 pm for 8 pm. Visitors welcome. Call **07546 495433**.

Pam

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NEWS FROM DOWNLANDS We are busy getting ready to welcome our students back from the Christmas holidays. Although we were very disappointed at the end of last term to have to postpone our fundraising Christmas Market and also the annual dance show, we are hoping to reschedule these for later this term. In other news, casting is complete and rehearsals are underway for our latest school production, Wendy & Peter, which is due to be performed later in the Spring term. The students and teachers are all working very hard to ensure this is fantastic production and we can't wait to see their progress over the next few weeks.

In fundraising, we raised over £1400 last term for Chestnut Tree House Children's Hospice through our "Daisy's Crazy Trainer Day" and our Christmas Tree Forest which was so well supported by our local community. We also made a delivery to the Burgess Hill Christmas Hamper Project and we are delighted with the

support that our school community has shown to families in our local area.

Of course, we're continuing to deal with an ever changing COVID-19 situation and working hard to keep our students and staff as safe as we can by following all the updated local and government guidelines.

Wishing everybody a happy and prosperous 2022.

Laura Bryant

WE WOULD LIKE TO SAY THANK

YOU to Daniel who has been delivering your Village Voice magazines in Chestnut Grove, Hurst Gardens, Kemps and The Pines, Hurstpierpoint for the past year.

Thank you for all your help.

Editors

CAN YOU HELP? We are looking for volunteers to deliver your free magazine Village Voice which has been delivered to you for the past 24 years in the Hurstpierpoint and surrounding areas. Do you think you have any spare time to deliver to your road/area then please give us a call on 01273 846978 or email info@villagemagazines.co.uk



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FAIRY SHRIMP: JUST ADD WATER I'm still disappointed. As a kid, I read American Spiderman comics, but I was always captivated by the inside back cover. There, an advert for 'sea-monkeys' showed a family of bizarre, grinning humanoid creatures which would become your pets and "bring smiles, laughter and fun into your home" if you sent away a fistful of dollars to somewhere called 'New Jersey'. Living in Olde England, the offer didn't apply, and my childhood therefore remained devoid of "smiles, laughter and fun." I realise now that an even greater disappointment awaited if I had actually ordered these creatures. In reality, sea-monkeys were simply brine shrimps: tiny crustaceans, not incredible aquatic simians.

Just like sea-monkeys, Britain's Fairy Shrimp are also crustaceans from the order Anostraca. They have transparent bodies, antennae, blobby black eyes on stalks and twenty-two leaf-like legs which propel them, upside

down, through water. They're positively pre-historic-looking and haven't bothered to evolve much since the Triassic period 200 million years ago. It's amazing they have survived so long. Unlike other crustaceans, such as crabs and woodlice, Fairy Shrimp do not have hard exoskeletons. This armour-free existence leaves them vulnerable and they can only survive where nothing will eat them. But where on earth can you find such a habitat on our hostile planet? Safe, predator-free homes don't just fall out of the sky.

As rain falls, it transforms the ruts, ditches and depressions of our world into puddles and these puddles are a freshwater fresh start for life. The Fairy Shrimp are the first settlers in this safe new world. But how do they get there? The spooky truth is they have always been there. Like Spiderman, the Fairy Shrimp have their own superpowers. Their eggs can lie desiccated and dormant in the soil for years, even decades. They are resurrected by



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water; the Pot Noodles of the animal world. There are legends of 100-year-old Anostraca eggs taken from museum shelves, wetted and awakened. One tale even tells of eggs carbon-dated at 10,000 years old being resurrected.

It's a long, dry wait down there in the earth but, when rain arrives, the pool party starts. Newly formed puddles teem with Fairy Shrimp, but puddles are only temporary accommodation. To adapt, Fairy Shrimp have a fast life cycle; a race to produce more eggs before their home dries and disappears. Unsurprisingly, Fairy Shrimp are incredibly rare and hard to find and you're more likely to encounter some actual fairies. But if you're out hiking on the South Downs looking to make a new start in 2022, keep checking those puddles. You may find some other animals trying to make a new start too.

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U3A UPIECES ON JONATHAN CANN

Jonathan Cann is a man of many parts, 'many parts' because he is an 'extra' and it was stories from his work in films, TV shows and adverts that he shared at the local meeting of the u3a.

In an always entertaining talk Jonathan explained that it's not a glamorous life. He can wait ten hours for a ten second shot of him looking in a shop window. His roles range from vicar to drag queen magician, from murder suspect to High Court judge. There have been parts in films like 'Bohemian Rhapsody' but he's unlikely to be recognised. The role of the extra is to 'provide the atmosphere by being in the background.'

What combines Punch and Judy shows and balloon modelling with waiting hours in the rain, dressed only in pyjamas? That's the life of Jonathan Cann, children's entertainer, and jobbing actor/extra and it was stories from the latter with which he captivated members of the local u3a.

His is a diverse life, at times meeting the stars but mostly standing on the sidelines and then enduring 52 takes of the same ten second scene. The compensations lies in the sheer variety of role, from 'unhinged gambler' to a

programme raising awareness of Men's Mental Health. And his enjoyment of the work was infectious.

Jeremy Weinstein

THE BEACON PARISH OF DITCHLING, STREAT & WESTMESTON

Happy New Year from everyone in the Beacon Parish. At the time of writing (end November), we were still looking forward to our Christmas services. We hope that by the time you read this, all will have been held safely and successfully and enjoyed by everyone.

Our pattern of weekly services from January onwards has not been finalised, so for up to the date information, please visit our website at <https://www.beaconparish.co.uk/>

Sherrian Guest

Deadline for the February issue is 4th January 2022

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Happy New Year! We must again say thank you to South Downs Nurseries for the donation of a beautiful Christmas Tree which brought a lot of joy to our members. It was the first time we have had a real tree and we have to say it was very pretty, especially after our volunteers decorated it.

We would like to get our bus running every day in the New Year, so do please let us know if you would like to be picked up to come to our Centre and have lunch. We can collect you between 10 am and 11 am, and will take you home between 1.30 pm and 2.30 pm.

Lunches - We serve lunches weekdays in our dining room - Brunch served on a Monday between 10am and 1pm as well as sandwiches, paninis, soups and cakes available.

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day at the latest. Our Menu is always on our website. If you need help with transport to come for lunch, we may be able to collect you in our minibus, do enquire in the office. We are aiming to get our bus on the road every day so if there is a particular day in mind, please do let us know. Our Coffee Shop is open from 9 am to 3 pm serving refreshments. Have you seen our Charity Shop, do come and have a look. Our shop and coffee shop are also open on Saturday mornings.

Activities – Art Group Thursday mornings, Canasta Thursday afternoon, Chiropody here Monday to Thursday.

– 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. 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. *All at Age Concern*

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CLUB STEAMS INTO 2022 Following the difficult pandemic period in 2020/1 we are pleased to announce we are up and running and meeting again on a regular basis. 2020 was particularly disappointing for the club as it was our 70th anniversary year of the club formation. We had planned a bumper exhibition at our usual venue but this had to be cancelled along with the 2021 show. The outlook for 2022 exhibition is still uncertain.

To help promote the club we are planning an open day at the Burgess Hill Theatre on **14/15th January**. It is hoped to attract interest from those of you new to the hobby. We will be showcasing a couple of our club layouts and have a secondhand stall selling model railway items. If you have started modelling and are seeking help and advice, we shall be pleased to share our expertise with you. We plan to have a help station in operation to sort any gremlins you may have with your rolling stock. A promotional video and details will be available about the club's activities and membership should you wish to join us.

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Terry Horner

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meet at Guide HQ, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint at 2 pm on the first Wednesday of each month.

5th January - A talk on Oldland Mill with Colin Woodford

2nd February - Hurst Life Magazine with Editor David Gingell

Apologies to those who came along in December expecting the Weald Ukulele Players and Singers. Due to Covid they have been unable to practice so are not attending any functions. Many, many thanks to Anthea Leaney who came along, at short notice, to talk to us about The Messels' of Nymans – the family and the House. Much appreciated.

For more information, please contact me on **01273 649023** or Dianne on **01273 835284**.

Ann Tranter

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reMEMber (THE CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME SOCIETY) Unfortunately, because of the Covid restrictions, we are unable to resume our meetings and fund-raising events for the time being.

However, our Newsletter is now online and can be accessed on our website – www.remembercfs.org.uk. Our Winter edition contains news about reMEMber and what's going on in the world of CFS/ME including the new NICE Guideline. Also, on our website you can access videos of presentations by top doctors at our Zoom conference in November 2020.

We are trying to raise funds to set up an exemplar service for people who have ME (Chronic Fatigue Syndrome). This could be a team consisting of a consultant physician, specialist nurses and rehabilitation staff. This would demonstrate to the NHS just what is needed throughout the UK.

So, all donations to reMEMber, however small, will be very welcome. To find out how

to donate, or for information about ME or the work of reMEMber, go to our website – www.remembercfs.org.uk, e-mail us at me_cfs@hotmail.com. Or telephone **01273 831733**.

Janice Kent

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – DITCHLING & DISTRICT BRANCH

On behalf of our President, Mrs Virginia Lewis-Jones, Vice President Mrs Juliet Smith JP, DL, Chairman Mr Tom Jones and the Branch Committee, we would like to thank all the Shops and Businesses, St Margaret's School and to everyone who has supported and donated to the 2021 Poppy Appeal. This year our total has reached £4,500 for which we are so very grateful.

Please accept a very heartfelt thank you to all who have given so generously. We wish you all a very Happy and safe 2022.

Margaret Bovill, Poppy Appeal Organiser.

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**WELL DONE HASSOCKS! WE RAISED £350 FOR ST PETER AND ST JAMES HOS-
PICE AT LIGHT UP HASSOCKS.** Thank you to all that came to visit us at Light Up Has-
socks. We (QD Stationery) decided to move outside the for the night. We had mulled wine on
offer as well as Face Painting by Tara from The Garden Spa – Eco Salon in Hurstpierpoint.
Tara offers her face painting services free every year plus she is an excellent beautician – please
try her out. All the proceeds went to the wonderful St Peter and St James Hopice. Thank you
again.

Jo and the team

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THERE AND BACK

So many times have I passed this way;
A winding time worn, potholed track.
A crumbling strip of tarmac grey,
Where many have hurried, there and back.

Cold winter's rain must soon arrive,
When flooded fields breach o'er the road.
And fattening sheep do then contrive,
To seek their higher drier abode.

When spring doth come in greeny flush,
The flock soon moved away.
Then man reclaims, harvest wheat so lush,
Where their animals once held sway.

The corn fields dressed in yellow hue;
On gentle rise the grey spired church.
The South Downs hazed in mystic blue;
What better place for man to search?

The path patrolled by wooded flanks,
Tall trees of cone and pine,
Peer through the stouter deciduous ranks,
Many draped with the twisted vine.

Where silently creeps the autumn fog,
Cross soggy paths and woodland space.



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There's a magic in the woodlands,
For those who choose to stay.
In the chatter of the magpie,
The screeching hidden jay.

Above the buzzard wheeling
in airy feathered flight;
What force could o'er replace God's gifts,
Which render such delight?

But sadness now gathers
with changing moods,
Summer visitors in decline.
What cuckoo now doth ring the woods,
Or sweet nightingale the pine?

All feathered friends still residing here,
Pour out their songs in praise;
And grounded creatures we revere,
From past to present days.

With closing year, four seasons past;
Possessed with beauty free.

Where nature's scenes consent to play,
How fortune now doth favour me,
When choosing to pass this way.

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HURSTPIERPOINT HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

We meet on the last Friday of each month in the Guide Hall next to Trinity Road car park. The speaker for our last meeting, Mak Norman, was unable to attend because of illness, but at very short notice Dr David Rudling of Ditchling was able to come and speak to us about the Romans in Sussex.

Our first meeting of 2022 is called "Sussex Shepherds" and will be presented by Ian Everest on **28th January**. Admission to all our meetings is free for members, there will be a small charge for non-members or members of other Historical Societies.

We have re-arranged Mak Norman's presenta-

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tion on the Anglo-Saxons for **Friday 25th February** starting at 8 pm. Mak (or "Osgar" to use his Anglo-Saxon name). Osgar will be bringing some artifacts from Anglo-Saxon Times and will attempt to teach us some of the Old English language!

Contact me - telephone **01273 832280**, e-mail **w.kent123@btinternet.com** for further information about our very friendly society. New members are always welcome.

Bill Kent (Chairman)

We thank Jan A-H for this Hassocks memory:-
In the 60s, on the corner of Downsview Road, there was an elegant Victorian post office. It had a magnificent mahogany counter and brass grilles. On the door was a copper and enamel sign saying, "dogs not admitted".

One day I dutifully tied up my whippet, posted my parcel I went home, only to realise that I had forgotten the dog. Thereafter, I always sneaked the dog in and, happily, no one complained!

When the post office was being demolished, I managed to acquire the sign for 50p and eventually gave it to a friend associated with the Bluebell Railway, where it was placed on one of the restaurant doors. Hopefully it's still there.



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HURSTPIERPOINT GYMNASTICS

AWARDS Despite all the Covid changes to our working – ventilation, gelling, cleaning, one-way system etc, -last term was one of our busiest ever. Gymnasts wasted no time in catching up on their lockdown stand-still and passed no fewer than a hundred and eighty six British Gymnastics Awards. The recipients started with Reception Infants right through to Secondary Year 11.

This Spring term – conditions permitting – will see the return of our Arts Competition, featuring Ribbon Solos, Beam or Hoop Pairs and Sports Acrobatic sixes.

There may be a few places left to join the Club for the Spring term, with vacancies particularly in our Pre-school girls classes on Friday afternoons. For the up-to-date position, please contact us through our website

www.hurstpierpointgym.co.uk.

Andrew Hair

HASSOCKS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY CENTENARY 2022

The Society was formed in 1922, so we will be celebrating our 100th birthday during the forthcoming year. We have much to look forward to.

However, when we held our AGM in November it became clear that we need to attract new members because our costs of hiring Adastra Hall and speakers are increasing, whilst our membership is decreasing. New members and visitors are always welcome to our meetings which are held on the 2nd Wednesday in the month. Do not let the word 'horticultural' in our name put you off – we are just (mainly)

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Following our November AGM, we enjoyed an interesting talk about the work of Medecins Sans Frontiers and in December we gathered for our Christmas Social with quizzes, a table decoration competition, film show and fish & chip supper. We have a varied programme of speakers, a members' flower show, social and a coach outing to Wisley to look forward to next year.

Our next meeting will be held in Adastra Hall on Wednesday **12th January** at 8 pm when Sarah Oldridge will be giving an illustrated talk entitled 'History & Work of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew'. Sarah worked at Kew for over 20 years and knows many of its secrets! All welcome.

For further information please contact our Chairman, Derek Swaine
jeannederek42@btinternet.com or phone
01273 842516.

Pat Ticehurst

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DITCHLING FILM SOCIETY We do hope you have enjoyed our last three films and would like to take this opportunity of thanking you for supporting us during what has been a very difficult period.

For your information, we have not planned to show a film in January 2022 however, we are in the process of putting together a short programme of interesting and varied films for next year which we will of course publicise nearer the time.

As some of you may have seen, we are currently advertising for a projectionist (a post which is currently unfilled) so if anyone has this skill and is keen to put themselves forward, we should be delighted to hear from them and for them to contact Jane Skelton at

janeyskelton@googlemail.com.

We do hope you have all been able to have an enjoyable Christmas and we should like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year.

Rowena Cager and Melanie Samuel

STAR CINEMA 2022 starts off on **14th January** with the popular musical **42nd Street** - it tells the story of a small-town girl from Middle America trying to make it on Broadway and has won several awards. Doors open at Adastral Hall at 7 pm and the film starts at 7.30 pm. Wine/tea/coffee and raffle. Tickets on the door concessions available (cash only please). The Star team look forward to welcoming you.

Liz Edmunds

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*Donation to Farney Close School Bolney –
Sue Horscroft (Fundraising Co-Ordinator)
Tates' delivery driver Richard Knowler in
Middle, Sara Hack (Principal) on right*

MID-SUSSEX FESTIVE GIFTS DELIVERED

Young and old alike are preparing for the festive season, having had Christmas trees donated by a Mid-Sussex Garden Centre. Every December, South Downs Nurseries in Hassocks supports the local community by presenting some of its freshly harvested, British-grown trees. Among the first recipients

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this year were Farney Close School in Bolney and Age Concern's centre in Hassocks.

It is always lovely to see the smiles as we hand over the trees. We know how excited the recipients are and how much they look forward to decorating their trees ready for Christmas.

Rebecca Houghton-Knapp



*Donation to Age Concern Hassocks –
Kirsty Hunnisett (left), Tates' delivery
driver Richard Knowler on right*



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THE WINDMILLS JUNIOR SCHOOL

has had a very busy half term. We were visited by Ofsted on the first Tuesday and Wednesday after the November half term break. Although we knew that we were in the 'Ofsted' window and were expecting a visit, we were not expecting the phone call so early in the half term. The process was rigorous but fair and the school team were amazing at being able to articulate and provide evidence of the strengths of the school and the priorities that we had been working on since the last inspection.

We are delighted with the report that articulates strongly what a good school The Windmills Junior School is. This acknowledges the quality of teaching and learning that the children receive at our school. The inspectors saw a carefully constructed curriculum that ensures all children experience a rich and broad curriculum that inspires them to be great learners. They were incredibly impressed with the children and how much pride they took in their learning and how motivated they were.

"Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They understand what is expected of them. They are polite and respectful. This means that the school is a friendly and well-ordered environment in which pupils thrive."

"Pupils enjoy their learning. They are inspired by the interesting work their teachers set for them. They are keen to answer questions and share their experiences and opinions. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and follow instructions. This helps lessons to flow smoothly and supports both learning and enjoyment."

(Ofsted Nov 21)

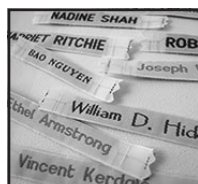
The report also acknowledges just how ambitious the school is for its pupils: "Expectations are high. Pupils respond well and are keen to do their best. They present their work carefully and work hard. Pupils relish the challenges that their teachers set them."

We were also very pleased that the inspectors could see evidence of us achieving our vision of ensuring children become global citizens and appreciate and value the wider world. "Leaders have placed global citizenship and the school's values at the centre of their curriculum. This is effective in helping pupils to learn about themselves and the wider world." We are very pleased that the Ofsted team saw the quality of education at The Windmills and we are proud of all who are part of the team effort in ensuring that children have a positive learning experience in their time with us.

In addition to Ofsted, the children have also had the opportunity to take part in: a Diwali dance workshop; think about bullying and how we ensure that doesn't happen in our school; year 6 have had 'bikeability' training which has taught them how to be safe on their bikes on the road and year 5 performed a number of Christmas songs at Light up Hassocks. A very busy half term indeed!

Ruth Jayal

***Deadline for the February 2022
issue is 4th January 2022***



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DITCHLING PLAYERS Following the success of Private Lives in November, the Ditchling Players are pleased to announce that their next production will be a collaboration with Mid Sussex Theatre Productions (MSTP) - formerly Haywards Heath Operatic Society. Written by the American playwright Rob Urbinati, 'Death By Design' is a hilarious comedy "mash up" of the intricate plots of Agatha Christie and the perfect wit of Noël Coward. The play will be performed during the week of Monday **9th May** at Ditchling Village Hall and launched on Monday **10th January** at 8 pm, also at the Village Hall. So do come along to hear more about the play; details of the characters and the audition process. Auditions will take place later the same week on Sunday **16th January** from 2 pm, again at the Village Hall.

If you'd like to audition, or have any further questions, please get in touch with the directors - Tracy Glover at info@mstp.co.uk or Debbie Dillon at

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chair@ditchlingplayers.org.uk. Full details of both the launch and audition events will also be on the Facebook pages for both MSTP and Ditchling Players, as well as the Players' website: **ditchlingplayers.org.uk**.

We look forward to seeing you on the 10th for this exciting venture.

David Tetttersell

HASSOCKS WI NEWS we meet at Adastra Hall at 7.45 pm on the third Monday in the month.

In December we had Christmas fun, games and a big raffle, a theatre trip, brisk walks and Christmas nibbles in our various groups.

Our meeting on Monday **10th January** will be at 2 pm with a new afternoon craft club at Adastra Hall.

On Monday **17th January** we meet at 7.45 pm at Adastra Hall 'Bring, Swish, Buy' - Wi Resolutions and raffle. Come along, a warm a welcome awaits - try something new in 2022.

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We're delighted to announce that in our spring season we will be singing the great Mozart Requiem, one of the most moving and powerful pieces of music ever written. We will also be singing choruses from another more re-



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cently composed Requiem, that of Karl Jenkins.

You are most welcome to come and try a rehearsal before deciding whether to join. Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings from 7.45 pm – 10 pm in Burgess Hill and begin on Monday **10th January**. Covid-related measures are in place during rehearsals. For further information and to contact us, visit our website at www.burgesshillchoral.org, look at our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/BHCS2> or phone **07522 493966**.

Frances Eales

TO THE GOOD SAMARITAN OF HAS-SOCKS who came to a broken-down car on Keymer Road on Tuesday evening, 30th November. The driver, a pensioner, was treated to a hot coffee and biscuits whilst he waited for the breakdown service to arrive. The stricken driver got home just before 1 am after a 6-hour wait on the kerbside. I would like to thank the Good Samaritan for the hot drink and to a friendly taxi driver and his fare, who took me home.

Joe



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NEWS FROM STONEYWISH as November goes out, Winter steps in. The larches are looking threadbare and the last oaks are disrobing in a flurry of leaves. First heavy frost has sent small creatures scurrying for cover. As happens every year, only hear scratchings in the eaves as field mice raid or add to their secret larders. It is hard to blame them. I myself have been storing up chutneys and jellies and dried fruit for mincemeat and look on my labours with equal pride and satisfaction. Hearing the tawny owls hunting at dawn and dusk, one has to concede it as a wise mouse that finds out a dry loft for shelter. Other neighbours, however, can be too close for comfort. As I sat up in bed with my tea the other morning, [Michael having trundled forth already with his wheelbarrow to feed the animals) I was dismayed to find the bedroom suddenly a-buzz with Wasps. Being allergic to their stings, I am respectful of Wasps. I caught four in a jam jar and threw them out the back door. On my return, I found four more and repeated the performance. After the fifteenth I

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admitted defeat decamped downstairs. Did we have a nest in the attic? And how had they come through? I found a crack in the ceiling and plugged it with Polly filler called our local wasp man who promptly came and reassured us that the Wasps were 'workers', probably from a nest in the wall cavity. They were tiny because only the smallest could wriggle through the gap I had plugged. He thought the problem was cured and the nest could be left with safety to its natural fate. Frost.

Hearing the national news today, I reluctantly acknowledge that we humans also face a chilly winter. My festive larder begins to look more like emergency rations than yuletide excess. Once again, the heart-warming celebrations, which are a necessity at this time of the year, seem about to be cancelled. We have been here before. Remember the Puritans? No maypoles, no Christmas merriment and certainly none of those devilish mince pies! I think, the sudden admiration of my Wasps of all God's creatures they must be surely among the most hated, most feared and marked out



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for extirpation, and yet, somehow, against all odds, they find a chink in a wall - an inaccessible, secret place - and build themselves a city, a golden, humming community where they can harmlessly live out their days. Even though winter is coming, and frost may strike at any moment, their golden will to live and defend their right to life, has already dispersed in thousand young Queens to a thousand other places, in readiness for the spring. What an unlikely source for inspiration! Yet such providence for the future is not confined to wasps and mice alone. The whole of nature has laid up vital stores and biding its time until the sun returns. The ingenuity of Mother Earth reveals itself in a spontaneous and irrepressible diversity all films whose collective intelligence has sustained life here for countless millenia and cannot be constrained by Man's reductive reasoning. Life is too busy living to heed those who would limit it to linear dimensions: graphs, models, equations, computations, predictions, anathemas. Even under its current bombardment of chemical and pseudo-biolog-

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ical disruptors, beleaguered life asserts its power to astonish and entrance us. Spontaneity is the key - the right of each thing to make its own contribution and live by its own truth. Any censorship of this diversity robs the cosmos of intelligence beyond our own, and our meddling may prove our own demise for it may be that the very enemy we would eradicate (a wasp!) Holds the secret to our own survival. Therefore, because I have faith in life, I believe there must be always be a chink in the wall, somewhere for the renegade joyousness and exuberant to flourish and burst forth once more. And herein is a lesson for the human heart too. For the mind of a man has a perfect maze of chinks and sanctuary corners where hope can hole up in a storm. In the spirit of which, I wish you a Happy New Year from all of us here at Stoneywish and may the delights of your Christmas chutneys and candles and winter walks and cheery greetings keep you as cosy as the hibernating seeds and animals which are tucked up quietly around us, dreaming of spring.

Rosemary

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100 participants are invited to sign up for the '100-4-100' challenge with the aim of doing 100 of something to each raise £100! By taking part you will be raising vital funds to provide specialist services for blind and sight impaired adults and children across the county, and at the same time having fun doing something you enjoy 100 times over!

A number of participants have already signed up: Fundraising Manager Chloe Neilson-Hopkin is growing 100 plants to sell, while Julie Branson, Fundraising Manager (maternity cover) will be walking 100 miles in 100 days. Two people have made a £100 donation each and one supporter has even enjoyed 100 gin and tonics and made a donation! Perhaps you could bake 100 cakes, read 100 books, swim 100 lengths, or play 100 rounds of golf – whatever it is you like doing!

In addition, 4Sight Vision Support will be running a Centenary Prize Draw. Tickets will be available from mid-January from its offices in Bognor Regis and Shoreham, costing £1 a ticket, in books of x10. Prizes include a tour for two people of Hepworth Brewery in Pulborough; four tickets for Rock of Ages at The Hawth Theatre, Crawley next May; a £30 voucher for the Giggling Squid Restaurant, Chichester; a Firebird Brewery beer gift pack; a gift token for the Regis Centre, Bognor, and a stunning metallic table lamp worth £145 from Reynolds Furniture in Bognor.

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COME AND HAVE A BROWSE

The closing date is Friday **4th March** and winners will be drawn on Monday **7th March**. Full Ts & Cs can be found on the website.

To discuss any ideas for the 100-4-100 campaign or to purchase prize draw tickets please call **01243 838001** or email **fundraising@4sight.org.uk**.

Cathy

CHRISTMAS POEM I am writing to apologise for my name giving the impression that the 'Christmas' poem in the December issue was written by me. I have to put that right!

It was, in fact, written by the late Bunty Higginbottom who was a founder member of our concert party Friends and Neighbours. From our first show in June 1977 Bunty wrote a poem - or sometimes two - as part of the programme in each show. She was greatly missed after she died in 2005.

Bunty was a very talented lady and was also very clever in dramatising a poem or song. One that immediately springs to mind is Benny Hill's "Ernie, the fastest milkman in the west". That was so funny and gave us many laughs at rehearsals too. Frank Oakley was Ernie and Janet Sharman a glamorous and flirty customer on his round. The audience loved it.

Some of the poems that Bunty wrote were about things that had personally happened to her such as when she was caught speeding down Keymer Road from Stonepound - another when losing her shoe beneath a train at Hassocks station. I'll ask Jo if she will include one now and again to give us a giggle.

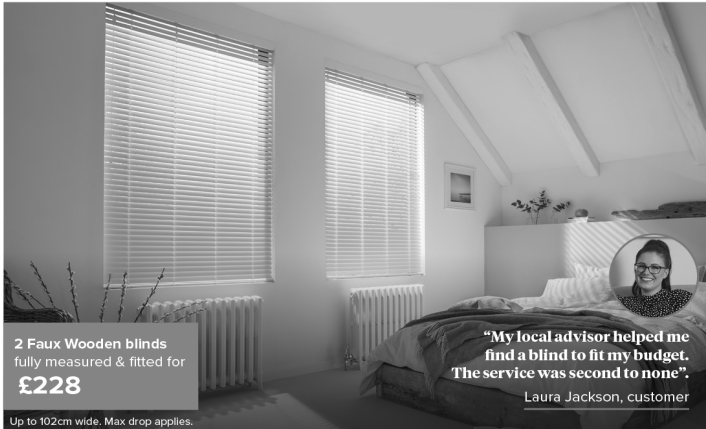
Let's hope for a Happy and Healthy New Year for us all.

Dorrie

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Katie Rose

HASSOCKS TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

Our **25th January** meeting will be our A.G.M. followed by a talk by Sheila Southwell "Treading the Boards" Sheila's years with the Birmingham & Midland Operatic Society. There will also be a raffle and afternoon tea. Visitors are welcome to come along and give us a try, no charge for first visit. We meet at Age Concern at 2.30 pm.

Sheila Southwell

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~~~ WHAT'S ON IN JANUARY ~~~

Clubs, Societies & Groups please let us have your programmes/events to **PUBLISH FREE** in this section.
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5th HURST MONTHLY SOCIAL GROUP Guide HQ, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, 2 pm. 'Oldland Mill' Colin Woodford. Guests welcome.

10th HASOCKS WI Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 2 pm. New afternoon Craft Club. Guests welcome.

10th HASOCKS FIELD SOCIETY Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7.45 pm. 'Plant Hunters' Frances Farrer-Brown

11th JAZZ LUNCH Hassocks Hotel, 12 pm, lunch included with booking call Jo 01444 235986.

12th HASOCKS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY Adastra Hall, Hassocks. 8 pm. 'History & Work of the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew' Sarah Oldridge

14th STAR CINEMA Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7 pm. '42nd Street'. Cash only on the door.

14/15th BURGESS HILL MODEL RAILWAY CLUB Burgess Hill Theatre, 98 Church Walk, Burgess Hill Fri 10.30 am - 5 pm, Sat 9 am to 4.30 pm, Open Day - Free Entry.

17th HASOCKS WI Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7.45 pm. 'Bring, Swish, Buy', Resolutions and Raffle. Guests welcome.

19th TREFOIL GUILD Guide Hall, Semley Road, Hassocks 7.45 pm 'Hurst Haven for Hedgehogs' Visitors welcome.

22nd HASOCKS VILLAGE MARKET National Tyres Forecourt, 9 am - 1 pm, Local produce, bread, honey, cheese, wine, veg etc.

22nd REPAIR CAFE Hassocks URC, 10 am - 12.30 pm, bring items for repair book your slot www.hkd-transition.org.uk

24th HASOCKS FIELD SOCIETY Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7.45 pm. 'Anne of Cleves, the lady behind the portrait' Helen Poole.

25th HASOCKS TOWNSWOMEN GUILD Age Concern Hassocks 2.30 pm. AGM followed by 'Treading the Boards' - Sheila Southwell. All welcome.

28th HURSTPIERPOINT HISTORICAL & GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY Guide HQ, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, 8 pm 'Sussex Shepherds' Ian Everest. Guests welcome.

29th BRIGHTON CONSORT St George's Church, Kemptown, Brighton 6 pm, 'Back to Basics' tickets 01273 833746.

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STEVE'S BACK PAGE GOSSIP

Happy New Year everyone I hope over the past few months you've enjoyed the change of format which has given me a chance to recount my rather colourful past and the people I got to know along the way. There was a young lad in the Pony Club called David Fuller he was the local Blacksmiths son, they lived in a house called 'The Forge' in Yateley. He was what I would call a good rider, but not a pretty one. He was always going on at me to let him ride Hawk, but Hawk didn't like other riders and especially heavy-handed ones. I'd always been gentle with his mouth because of his past and I NEVER carried a whip whereas David always had one, he liked to bang it against his long leather boots which he did with great gusto, especially when the girls were about, he did love the ladies did our David, anyway one day, I relented and said he could have ago provided he didn't carry a whip, which he threw at my feet in great annoyance and he then got on. Instead of lowering himself gently in the saddle he thumped down hard, I turned to the group of girls watching and said I'll give it 5 minutes at most before he hits the ground and in actual fact, it was a little less than that, he started kicking Hawk to get him to move, Hawk turned his head to look at me as if to say I hope you warned him what could happen to him. I just smiled back so he knew I had, Hawk then trotted forward for a few yards then slammed on the brakes, did a half rear to unbalance poor David, then followed that up with an enormous buck which sent David out of the front door like an exocet missile. Luckily, he was wearing his riding hat which was a rare event for David, strangely he never asked if he could ride him again.

David was never happy with just Pony Club events, he loved doing exciting things with his horse, and inevitably I got drawn in to going along with him - two memorable events always stick in my mind, the first one was with the Sealed Knot of which David was a member. These people re-enacted events of the English Civil War, why was beyond me but, they did it with great gusto and I'm not adverse to doing a bit of dressing up. If you remember at the time, I was the Golden Boy of Moss Bros. I had access to all departments which included their magnificent costume and fancy-dress department. So, I went and got fitted out in full English cavalier gear, I looked well a bit like a toy soldier, but I felt great, on the day of the re-enactment which was at old Basing House our mission was to rescue a priest. So, pursued by these four Round Heads on horses we had to gallop into the courtyard leap off our horses run through Basing House into those secret passageways, where the priest was holed up in a very well-hidden Priest hole, we grab him, run back out into the courtyard, throw the priest onto the horse, and made a quick getaway, pursued by these four Round Heads who were firing fake flintlock pistols at us. We had to deliver the priest to our Captain by galloping around to the front of the Basing House, where a full battle was going on between the Royalists and the Round Heads. The adrenaline rush was enormous, David leapt off his horse to start beating four bells out of his poor Roundhead with his sword which had no point, but health and safety hadn't been invented yet, so it really was a free for all. I leapt off Hawk, drew my sword and looked around for the smallest Roundhead to engage with, but they were all quite sturdy guys and a lot of them carried these long pikes, but I went for it anyway, it was a lot of fun and I could quite understand why they do it, especially afterwards when everyone gets together for a bit of a party, a lot of the ladies were dressed as wenches, which was all part of the history of this era.

My other foray into the world of re-enactment this after a very excited David turned up at the stable with his latest copy a Photo Play which was the film magazine of the time. It also had a classified section which was full of different film ads. The one that had excited David was that a new film about the Charge of the Light Brigade which was in the planning stage and they were looking for extras who could ride to apply for a part. About 670 Light Brigade Cavalry Men made their disastrous charge and Brighton based director Tony Richardson was determined to bring it to the big screen. I thought as teenagers we wouldn't get a reply, but we did and were invited to attend the audition.

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