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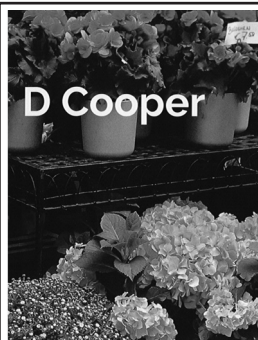
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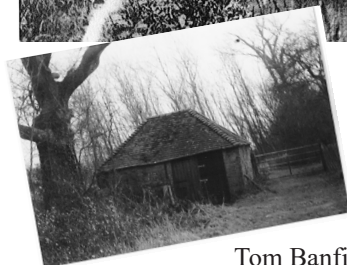
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The stable building
which is still standing
today taken in 1990.



Tom Banfield taken somewhere
between 1920/1930

Tom Banfield worked for James Webster - Wickham at the watermill in Truslers Lane. Born in 1900 in Spring Cottage, Church Lane, Albourne. The person who owned the Mill was James Webster Wickham who died in 1926, the mill then closed shortly after as there was no one to take it on. The house he lived in is still there.

Dave Evans



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Giles Turner APFS
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HASSOCKS GOES GOLD SUNFLOWER GROWING COMPETITION

We are delighted to announce our 3rd annual Hassocks Goes Gold Sunflower Competition. Could you be the lucky winner of the tallest sunflower in 2022? This year we have added a category of 'prettiest sunflower grown in an indoor pot' for anyone who does not have access to a garden or would prefer to grow a smaller plant. The competition is open to all ages and to anyone living in Hassocks. Also eligible are any children who attend a school in Hassocks (whether they live in the village or not). We encourage entrants to plant sunflowers in front gardens if possible so that Hassocks residents can enjoy the flowers. Many



SHINING A LIGHT ON CHILDHOOD CANCER
Hassocks Goes Gold
Sunflower Growing Competition

Plant a sunflower in your garden (front if you can)
Measure when grown from base to highest point
Send a photo of your sunflower with its height (cms)
Or plant one in a pot instead and send us a photo

Prizes for the tallest garden grown
and the prettiest in an indoor pot
Winners announced 1st Sept 2022
Open to current Hassocks residents & Hassocks school children
All ages welcome!

TO ENTER:
Post your photo & height on the "Hassocks Goes Gold" Facebook page
OR email to sunflowers4hassocks@gmail.com
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thanks to our sponsor Matt from Maple Leaf Gardens who has also agreed to judge the indoor pot category.

As well as being a great event for the community, the competition aims to raise awareness of the Hassocks Goes Gold campaign which will run for the month of September. During September, the HGG campaign will aim to raise awareness and much needed funds for research into the causes and treatments for childhood cancers. There is no fee to enter the sunflower competition, but we welcome any donations to the fund set up by the Bartlett-Bundy family in memory of their wonderful daughter Pearl:

<https://specialnamedfunds.cclg.org.uk/pearlpower/>
To enter, post your sunflower photo (and sunflower height in cms if entering the tallest sunflower category) on the Hassocks Goes Gold Facebook page or email to sunflowers4hassocks@gmail.com. The closing date is the **24th August**. Winners will be announced on the 1st of September to mark the beginning of Hassocks Goes Gold month. Good luck!

Rachel Barton

Lucy Locksmith.
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AGE CONCERN Dale Avenue, Hassocks. Main office **01273 844461** www.achassocks.co.uk
Come and celebrate with us. Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebrations - Saturday **4th June** held here at the Centre, we will be holding a buffet lunch between 12 pm and 2 pm in our dining room, tickets must be pre booked at the office and gives entry to our Platinum Jubilee Raffle prize, Quiz and background music.

Coffee shop open as normal 9 am – 12 pm. Our charity Shop will be open from 9 am for you to look around. Come and celebrate with us we look forward to welcoming you. Dress for the occasion, prize for the best Jubilee outfit!

The Centre will be closed on Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd June on the Bank Holidays .

Enjoy all the celebrations whatever you are doing. Volunteer Drivers needed - Do you have time on your hands ? Could you drive our Bus? We are looking for some more drivers to help collect the elderly from their doorstep and bring them to Age Concern for company and lunch. We are currently running the bus two days a week, but we would like to increase this. You will need a D1 to enable you to do this, please do contact the office, either by phone or



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Happy Jubilee from All at Age Concern

HURST MONTHLY SOCIAL GROUP Guide HQ, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, 2 pm first Wednesday of each month.

Many thanks to Melanie Gibson-Barton for giving such a wonderfully informative presentation in April on The Belgian Royal Family. Most enjoyable.

1st June is our AGM. We will start earlier at 1 pm with Fish & Chips, which must be pre-ordered, followed by the AGM at 2 pm, a Quiz and tea & cake.

1st July Heather McNiven is giving a presentation on Bees.

We have 3 sub-groups that meet regularly - Walking, Textile & Book Club - and are open to suggestions for helping to start any new ventures. Just let us know.

New members are always most welcome - first visits are free.

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



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ADASTRA BOWLING CLUB 1922 TO 2022 - 100 YEARS OLD!

As you walk through Adastra Park have you noticed all the club members enjoying a game of bowls in the bright sunshine? Have you popped your head over the hedge? You may have seen the two knew sails? I can confirm that we are not opening a windsurfing school, but we have erected the two sails to announce the centenary year of Adastra Bowling Club. Club members started the birthday celebrations with a cheese and wine party on the evening of Monday 25th April.

I recently had a conversation with my granddaughter about sport in general, but more importantly about bowls. She thought that in the near future the game would be played by robots, with the players remaining seated around the green using remote controls to operate the robots. If you would like to try your hand at bowling, please come and join us... before the robots takeover.

We have a couple of events confirmed, with many more being planned:-

A mixed game against a combined Sussex County Bowling Association on Tuesday **21st June** at 2 pm with a formal dinner after the game.

We will welcome the famous Chelsea Pensioners for a game on Wednesday the **20th July** at 2 pm, who will probably arrive in their famous red and black uniforms.

We welcome new members to join the Adastra Bowling Club, engage in a new sport, socialise and be part of the village community. If you would like to try your hand at

bowling please contact Barry Sheffield on
01273 84 3855.

David Reader

POYNINGS COUNTRY FETE Everyone is welcome to join in the family fun on **2nd July** in the Rectory Gardens in Poynings, situated just behind the Church, from 2 pm until 4.30 pm.

This is an annual event which has sadly been on hold for the past 2 years, but now we are ready and eager to go again. This year we are holding a Hobby Horse Gymkhana, bring your own or use one of the ready-made ones which will be on hand. There will be Book, Plant, Cake, Cherry Stalls and many more.

Something for everyone including the chance of meeting two of the cutest Shetland Ponies. Try your hand at Putting or catching a rat! Perhaps you may win on the Bottle Tombola or the Raffle.

This is a chance to leave your worries behind and unwind in the beautiful Sussex countryside. Poynings is a special little village nestling in the foothills of the South Downs. Maybe take a stroll down to the Village from the Devils Dyke and then pop into the Fete where you can enjoy a well-earned Cream Tea or a glass of Pimm's and listen to some gentle relaxing live music.

Come along and experience some good Old-Fashioned Entertainment.

All proceeds go towards the upkeep of The Mid-Downlands Churches of Pyecombe, Poynings, Newtimber and Edburton.

Linda Warburton

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BURGESS HILL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY are holding their Summer Show on Saturday **25th June** in the Cyprus Hall, Cyprus Road, Burgess Hill, commencing 1.30 pm.

Refreshments, homemade cakes, plant and produce stalls, tombola.

www.burgesshillhorticulturalsociety.com.

Flo Whitaker

HURSTPIERPOINT OPEN GARDENS Sunday **19th June** 1 pm to 5.30 pm

We are absolutely delighted to announce that some local gardeners are again opening their gardens on Sunday **19th June**, to raise money for our own, local, St Peter and St James Hospice. Already, we have 9 beautiful, interesting and different-sized gardens lined up for you and the 2022 event promises to be a much-needed extra-special and sociable occasion

This year, the secret gardens are clustered around the High Street area so it will be much easier for those of you who prefer shorter distances to walk to visit most, if not all, the gardens. We will also have some transport available as before.

Tea and home-made cake will be available so you



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can sit, relax and take in the scenery. To make the afternoon even more enjoyable, there will be live music and various stalls, including one selling locally grown plants.

We will keep you up-to-date via Hurst Life and other local publications; banners and flyers around the village and our Facebook page Hurstpierpoint Open Gardens. Our website is

www.hurstpierpointopengardens.co.uk

Any

queries ring Prue on **01273 835064**.

Prue Peters

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – DITCHLING AND DISTRICT BRANCH

We shall be commemorating the end of the Falklands War on Tuesday **14th June**, 2022, at Ditchling War Memorial at 11 am. There will be a brief service of commemoration led by Revd David Wallis, followed by Mrs Juliet Smith, JP DL, Branch Vice President, laying a wreath on behalf of the Branch. Wreaths will also be laid at Streat War Memorial, at 10 am, and at St Martin's Church, Westmeston. Please do join us.

For more information please contact me, the Branch Secretary and PAO on **01273 845319**.

Margaret Bovill

HURSTPIERPOINT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY SUMMER SHOW

Saturday **25th June** at 2.15pm in the Village Centre. Summer flowers, fruit and vegetables, pot plants, floral art, cookery, hand-craft, photography and children exhibits.

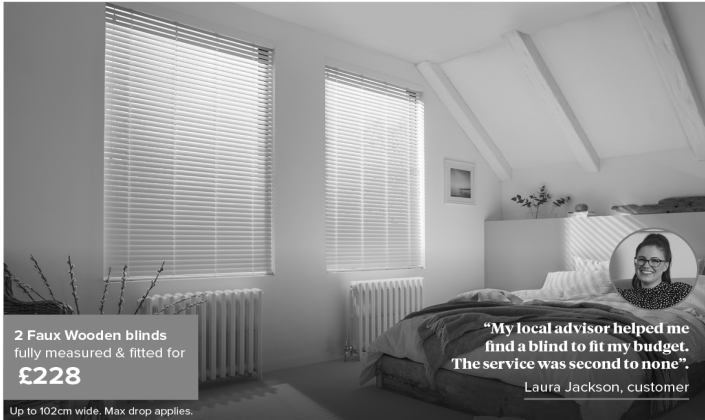
No need to be a member to enter. Simply pick up a schedule from Gibsons in Hurst High Street, fill in the entry form, return it to Gibsons and then display your exhibit/s

on Saturday morning. We'd love to see you. Tea and homemade cake, raffle and auction. *Kathy Green*

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HASSOCKS MAY DAY "Lovely community day", "amazing", "fantastic", "brilliant", just some of the wonderful comments about Hassocks May Day. With some 5,000 visitors joining in the family fun: beat the goalie, knock the stumps, baking bread twizzlers and toasting marshmallows for smores, crafting paracord keyrings, face painting, running in the family fun run organised by Hassocks Community Runners.

The pictures say a thousand words and the community support means so much for all our charities and community groups. Hassocks May Day is all about bringing the community together to celebrate May Day, and I sincerely feel this was achieved. Thank you to everyone who made the event such a success.

Burgess Hill Marching Youth opened Hassocks May Day and the students of Hassocks Infants entertained us with traditional maypole dancing.

Our infamous dog show brought in all the motley mutts from the area to enter a variety of classes from Best Puppy to the Waggiest Tail. Well done to all our winners. Thank you to our dog judge Bridget and dog show organiser Kate.

Congratulations to our winners of the baking competition and flower arrangement competition. Thank you to PearlPower and Bella June respectively for organising. I would like to say a special thank you to Daryn from Burgess Hill Community Radio who entertained us for the day keeping us informed throughout.

For more pictures go to our Facebook page Hassocks May Day.

Next Hassocks May Day is Monday **1st May 2023**. See you then!

Michelle Binks

BRIGHTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL invites you to celebrate midsummer with 10 outdoor and indoor events in Brighton's Queen's Park and St Bartholomew's Church. The programmes include medieval fun with Jogleares, baroque music from In Echo, a family concert with puppets, and a workshop and concert featuring Indian classical music and dance. Further details are available at www.bremf.org.uk/whats-on/, and you can also purchase tickets there for all events. There is a newly published brochure which you can request in print form or as a pdf file by emailing jenny.pain@gmail.com or by phoning **01273 833746**.

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THE WINDMILLS JUNIOR SCHOOL during the spring our children have been undertaking working with our landscape gardener (who is developing our wildlife area) to plant some trees. Earth Restoration Service very kindly donated 50 trees to the school to enhance this area further, whilst also doing good for the planet. The children had a great time planting their own tree and learning about the different trees. They are going to be keeping a close eye on them and we look forward to watching them grow.

Year 6 have recently returned from their residential trip to PGL Windmill Hill. Each year, our oldest year group enjoy a week of outdoor action and adventure in the purpose-built site near Herstmonceux. The children's courage and skills are put to the test in a range of exciting activities, from high-wire challenges on the climbing wall, trapeze and Jacob's Ladder, to more grounded pursuits such as archery, fencing and orienteering.

This year brought its own particular challenges in the form of low temperatures and high winds, but the children showed incredible resilience and got stuck into every new activity with smiles on their

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faces.

Huge thanks to the staff members and volunteers who supported the trip and took great care of the children around the clock, helping make the trip such an unforgettable experience for every one of them.

Year 3 have thrown themselves into their English learning and have been enjoying writing both in school and at home. We have been blown away by the enthusiasm and engagement they have shown and the writing, as a result, has been amazing. The children delved into their 'Meet the Greeks' topic and showed a real interest in life in those times. Over the last 2 weeks, the children have used famous Greek myths as inspiration for their writing. They have designed their own Greek god or goddess and written character descriptions of them using fantastic, ambitious vocabulary as well as writing setting description for the perfect Greek myth settings. These pieces of writing have engaged the children and have been a fantastic opportunity for them to showcase all of the writing skills they have learned this half term.

Year 4 have been learning about symmetry in some

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of our maths lessons. They explored horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines of symmetry using the Numicon shapes on a baseboard. The children challenged each other to complete different symmetrical patterns. There were lots of fantastic discussion and everyone really pushed themselves to make sure they had finished it correctly.

Year 5 have been busy writing poems about awareness of deforestation. They looked at, and tried to replicate, a range of different poems: kennings, free verse and strict verse. The book we used for our focus was called 'The Kapok Tree,' which explored the differing perspectives of rainforest animals and how they felt when their homes were destroyed. Each child chose an animal from the rainforest to write about and learnt how important it was to see this from the animal's perspective. This links very closely to one aspect of our curriculum intent where we ask children to become global citizens, thinking about significant issues facing the globe.

The Windmills children are heavily involved in many sporting activities and competitions. A group of Year



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5 girls took part in a Tag rugby festival in April and despite the challenging weather all the pupils were brilliant. Not once did they stop trying hard, they smiled the whole time and they really enjoy it. It was also lovely to see some old Windmills girls there who were supporting running the event. A range of other sporting events including athletics, cricket, tennis and golf are coming up during the summer term. We are looking forward to a very sporty summer.

Leila Murray

HASSOCKS WHIST CLUB Do you enjoy playing whist?

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Members of 1st Hurstpierpoint Girls Brigade with their Easter gardens

A GIRLS' BRIGADE GROUP HAS CREATED AN ARRAY OF EASTER GARDENS, thanks to a generous donation from a local charity and garden centre.

The 1st Hurstpierpoint used materials provided by South Downs Nurseries in Hassocks, including a range of succulents, compost, gravel and the necessary pots. The gift was arranged by the Budding Foundation which works to help children and young people across Sussex.

"The girls just loved making their Easter gardens", said Helen, a volunteer leader at 1st Hurstpierpoint Girls Brigade. "They enjoyed learning about how to pot succulents and look after them at home. Thank you for the generous donation which made this possible."

The members also managed to make some extra gardens to give to the Group leaders as Easter presents.

It was lovely to see how happy the girls were with their Easter gardens, we are always delighted when young people enjoy learning about horticulture and the environment they live in.

Clive Gravett

GROWING MINDS GERMINATE Children learning about seed germination and the structure of plants have been helped in their studies thanks to a donation from their local garden centre.

Windmills Junior School in Hassocks have been given all they need to teach this area of the syllabus. Year 3 students can now each raise their own seeds from scratch, hold and inspect their seedling, close up, before planting it outside.

South Downs Nurseries donated some pots, seeds, compost and bedding plants to the village school.

We are always keen to support the local community and what better way than to encourage young children to discover an early interest in plants.

Items donated included multi-purpose compost, plantable seed books, radish and marigold seeds, approximately 100 green pots from the onsite nursery, and some bedding plants of viola, marigold, busy lizzie, nicotiana, and dianthus.

Rebecca Houghton-Knapp



Garden centre assistant Tina Marriott presenting the donated goods to Year 3 teacher Sarah Hilton

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Thank you to all our volunteers who have come forward to deliver this magazine in the Hurstpierpoint, Sayers Common & Albourne areas.

We have a few areas left which we need help delivering so if you think you can help please give us a call or email us.
(the amount in the brackets is roughly the amount to be delivered in the specific area)

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1,000th AWARD 8 Elise Bramich was the recipient of the 1,000th Award 8 presented by Hurstpierpoint Gymnastics Club at their last award evening. The photo shows her with two of her friends who also gained their Awards. The Spring term saw over 130 gymnasts gain their British Gymnastics Awards. Gymnasts often take up to a year to work for each level. The Club has already presented 1,000 of Awards 7, 6, 5 & 4, amongst over 12,000 earned over their history.

Gymnasts are currently working not only on their awards, but on vaulting and routines for the Club's 38th Annual Championships in June.

There are a few places left to join the Club, with vacancies particularly in our Pre-school girls classes on Friday afternoons - 1.30 pm, 2 pm or 2.30 pm. Our Club offers regular classes at affordable costs with fully trained coaches, free awards each term, two free entry competitions each year and subsidised clothing.

For the up-to-date position, please contact us through our website www.hurstpierpointgym.co.uk

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THE ACORNS NURSERY After 21 glorious years at Westmeston Parish Hall, The Acorns Nursery and Forest School team will relocate to Lindfield in September to open a new nursery and work in tandem with our sister nursery school already well established in Denmans Lane, Lindfield. So please take full advantage of The Acorns final Summer at Westmeston!

On offer is a wonderful nursery and forest school for children aged 2 to 8 and a forest school programme for home-educated children.

We offer 'Stay and Play' sessions for parents and toddlers on Mondays and Wednesdays and a Holiday Fun programme for 2 to 11 year olds from **25th July to 19th August**. Please book your places now.

Janet Irwin, the teacher owner, will continue to offer an outdoor programme for both nursery age children and older ones being home-educated or deferring entry to school. With a 'can do' attitude, and mixed age group, the children thrive and gain a wonderful sense of wellbeing.

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NEWS FROM DOWNLANDS So much has been going on at Downlands over the last term. We've loved being able to welcome friends and families back into school for our school production Wendy & Peter Pan, the Dance Show and our Spring Music Concert. The students and staff work so hard to prepare for these events and it's wonderful to be able to showcase their many talents once again. We are delighted to have been able to resume school trips, and over the past few weeks our students have been to London to see The Woman In Black, the Imperial War Museum, Truleigh Hill and Chichester Cathedral.

Our never-tiring PTA, the Downlands School Association, are busy organising fundraising events and their South Downs Challenge has just raised almost £2000 for the school. This event involved much of our school community walking, running or cycling parts of the South Downs Way. As part of this fundraising, we also made a donation of £100 to the South Downs ReNature project. They are always looking for more volunteers, so if you can help, even if only occasionally, please email dsa@downlands.org.



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Finally, after an uncertain couple of years, our Year 11 students are sitting their GCSE examinations. We wish them all luck and am sure that their results will reflect all of the hard work that they have put in over the last five years.

Thank you, as always, for your support, from the staff, students and families of Downlands Community School.

The Downlands Summer Fayre will be held on Saturday **25th June** 12 pm to 4 pm. *Laura Bryant*

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A Good Ole Street Party in the 1950s in Parklands Road, Hassocks



~~Top~~ PHOTOGRAPH. "MUMS" L to R.

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(Mums) ADULTS Standing (Bottom Photograph)

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(Possibly the STREET Party. was to celebrate The Festival of Britain 1951)

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GHOST MOTH A few years ago, as the sun set over the South Downs, I was wandering through a wood on a twilight hike. Through the trees I noticed about a dozen figures decked out in brilliant white gathering in a small clearing. I hit the floor and buried amongst the bracken, watched as other white figures joined them. Each individual slowly started swaying, swinging hypnotically like a pendulum suspended on an invisible wire. The whole silent scene felt eerie, otherworldly, ancient. I was spell-bound and barely breathing, scared I would be discovered and this mesmerising performance would end. As some of the figures swung fixed to their stations, others oscillated wildly, whirling and crashing into each other. The light was fading fast and as my surroundings dissolved into shadow the swaying white figures seemed luminous against the gloom. Then, as the full moon rose and illuminated the glade, the action slowed, the figures retreated and I was left alone in the gloaming. The ritual I had witnessed was the dance of the Ghost Moths: elaborate courtship behaviour performed by the males on warm summer evenings across Sussex. That moonlit glade had been temporarily transformed into a miniature moth disco where these incredible insects pirouetted, pranced, swaggered and strutted in an attempt to attract a female. More 'Saturday Night Fever' than 'The Wicker Man'. And, like tiny Travoltas, the male Ghost Moths know that to stand out on a crowded dancefloor you need a flashy white suit. Their wings are whiter than white and look as though they have been hand-painted with Tipp-Ex.

The female Ghost Moth has a more subdued wardrobe and wears pale yellow wings with elegant orange swirls. Males also have another trick up their sleeve (or in this case their trouser legs). Their hind legs contain furry scent-brushes, which release pheromones into the air like an overpowering aphrodisiac. Once the ladies are lured, it's the individual moth's dancing which seals the deal. It can be murder on the dancefloor and scuffles start as the males try to assert their positions. It's a behaviour known as lekking and the dominant dancers will lead a lucky lady of the lek into the surrounding shadows. In days gone by the moth's mysterious, ethereal waltz was interpreted as something supernatural and it has been suggested that the dance of the Ghost Moth gave rise to local legends of fairies and Will-O'-The-Wisps. If anything, the reality is just as magical and spellbinding to watch.

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 guide book, Discovering Wildlife. It's easy to join online at sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/join.

Michael Blencowe

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DITCHLING FILM SOCIETY We are showing two films in June - on Thursday, **2nd June** our film will be *Petite Maman* who is a heart-breakingly hopeful fairy tale for all ages. Eight-year-old Nelly (Josephine Sanz) has just lost her beloved, maternal grandmother and her parents go to her mother's childhood home to clear it. Nelly's mother (Nina Meurisse) is deeply upset by the whole process and leaves during the night without saying goodbye to her daughter. A little later, after exploring the house and then going into the woods to play, Nelly meets a similar aged girl building a treehouse. The girl, Marion (Gabrielle Sanz), is extremely friendly and invites her to help and what ultimately transpires is a tender tale of childhood grief, memory and connection.

Director: Celine Sciamma. France 2021. 72 minutes. Cert PG.

On Thursday, **16th June** we are having a special screening of *Final Account* - Luke Holland's film to be introduced by Sam Pope, who was the associate producer and editor. It received a standing ovation at the Venice Film Festival and is a documentary masterpiece based on nearly 300 filmed interviews with elderly perpetrators from the Nazi side - an oral history of the 3rd Reich. In the last decade of his life, Luke, a long-time resident of Ditchling, took to the road with a small camera in search of old Nazis in Germany and Austria. Little archive existed about them apart from those held to account at Nuremberg. Fearing memories would be half-recollections or lies, Luke discovered harrowing stories told from clean, well decorated homes by people apparently leading calm lives in ordinary towns, often near the empty shrines of the camps. This is an important film

which everyone should see made by an acclaimed documentary-maker. In the film's epigraph, Luke said "perpetrators are not born they are made".

Director: Luke Holland 2021 German-language; British-American 90 minutes Cert PG13.

On Thursday, **7th July** we shall be showing *Summerland* - a lovely, hopeful and rather magical film shot in Seaford and Brighton. Alice, a reclusive writer, particularly interested in folklore, is resigned to a solitary life on the cliffs by the sea in Kent while World War II rages across the Channel. She very reluctantly takes in a spirited young boy, Frank, who has been evacuated from London. Initially Alice has no time for the boy, however, she slowly warms to the new arrival whose innocence and wonder seems to rekindle long, suppressed feelings of affection. Whilst bonding with Frank, Alice starts to revert to her past and her meeting with Vera in the 20's and the pang of first love that now sits like a chip of ice in her heart.

Director: Jessica Swale. UK 2020. 99 minutes. Cert PG.

The films will be shown in Ditchling Village Hall. Films start at 8 pm. Doors open at 7.30 pm. Wine will be available before the film and there is ample free parking behind the Hall. Guests and temporary members are welcome for a small charge payable at the door.

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THE BIG HURST JUMBLE TRAIL When the sun rose on Sunday 10th April, 130 stallholders dotted around Hurstpierpoint breathed a collective sigh of relief. This was the day of the first ever Big Hurst Jumble Trail, so it was a bit of an experiment, and the weather certainly gave it a fighting chance of success.

The whole idea was for a relaxed fun day – promoted by Hurst Rethink Community – to give villagers an excuse to get out and about around Hurst, meet friends - old and new; neighbours and other villagers and build on the sense of camaraderie that has developed over the past couple of years.

The incentive to stroll around the village was provided by the 130 stall holders ('Jumblers') who had elected to host a stall outside their home to clear out some of their unwanted 'stuff' – giving away, selling whatever, there were no rules. It was also an opportunity for families to participate in fun (and useful) joint projects and for the little ones to sell some home-made cakes and maybe learn how to bargain (with the 'Jumblees')

Judging from the evident enjoyment and camaraderie, the event was a huge success, and this is what we are hearing from the feedback. It was

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wonderful to see people ambling in the spring sunshine and stopping to buy, chat, catch up with news and generally relax. There were oodles of interesting goodies available at different stalls, from toys, books, furniture, fruit and veg, plants, clothes, jewellery, fob watches (!) and on and on. Something for everyone.

The organisers will be giving Hurstpierpointians the opportunity for feedback and a poll (see Facebook 'The Big Hurst Jumble Trail' group) to determine how/if any want a repeat and what changes are suggested to improve the event – but, already, it's looking like there will be another 'Big Hurst Jumble Trail' coming up in the not-too-distant future.

Thank you to everyone who participated – it couldn't have happened without you!

Prue Peters



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NEWS FROM STONEYWISH There were hawthorn trees blossoming at Stoneywish on the first of May this year. The hawthorn, also known around the country as quickthorn, whitethorn or may, is one of our plant elders in the British Isles, (hawthorn pollen 7,000 years old has been found here). With age comes wisdom and the thorn tree is also one of our great teachers. A diminutive and easily overlooked, shrubby, scrubby hedgerow filler, it is yet so important in folklore and medicine and so valuable to wildlife and to our cultural memory of beauty and poetry, it deserves the highest respect. May Day, with its maypole dancing, music, flowers, and (ahem!) lovers' trysts in the bushes, originally celebrated the arrival of hawthorn blossom - the official end of winter and the beginning of summer. In the Middle Ages, according to the Gregorian calendar, that would have been the 12th of May. Branches of may were cut for the rituals of life and love - Hawthorn was believed to be a fairy tree, whose white magic protected both. And true enough, the tree really does provide a healing tonic for the heart and circulation. The first leaves, soft and palatable, were commonly known as 'bread and cheese'. A tasty nibble for children on the walk to school, or a life-saver in time of famine. From earliest days the thorn was recognised as a useful barrier for sheep and cattle. 'Haw' comes from 'hage', Old English for hedge (here at Stoneywish we have one field with the name 'Sheep Hag', Sheep Hedge) and

after the enclosure of the commons, when the countryside assumed its familiar form - a patchwork of fields bounded by thousands of miles of hawthorn hedges, these were all pruned and 'laid' manually and annually by armies of 'hedgers'. In here on the Reserve, many of our hedgerow thorns have 'got away', and grow according to their own straggling, whim. Untrimmed and left to their own devices, these may be useless for the purpose of restraining livestock, but they have their own magical importance. Their branches provide safe refuge for birds, a bower for bees in spring, and a larder which will see hungry flocks through lean winter days. They are also, if one can only train the eye to slow down, take pause, and follow the sinuous pathways of their branches, extraordinarily beautiful. We have none which are terribly old, yet they become knobby and twisted quite young in life, if given the chance. And here is a case where old age and beauty increase together. Do not be fooled by the machine trimmed stumps you see by the roadside. These can be veterans too! The Hethel Old Thorn in Norfolk is thought to be 700 years old and in 1755 its girth was measured at 13 feet, while one of its branches was found to be over 7 yards long! The wood of the hawthorn is hard and tough (*cretaegus*, the latin name, comes from the Greek for strength) - even-grained enough to be used for wood-engraving - fine enough for cabinet-making and fragrant when put on the fire! The fruits can be cooked in hedgerow jams. The flowers were

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once made into jellies and wines. A tree of such abundance... However did someone conceive of the idea that to bring the flowers indoors would bring death to the house? One suspects a political motive. An attack on the customs of the past, whichever past that was so long ago, when the blossoms meant life and health...

If it is not too late this year, or certainly next year, celebrate May Day on whatever day you like, by standing under a full-grown hawthorn tree and inhaling the fragrance and marvelling at the bridal sprays of flowers. The thorn tree, along with the apple, is part of the rose family – (the echoes of the theme of love linger on). So don't let anyone tell you this is common scrub and fit to be grubbed out. This is a doorway to a miraculously rich and nourishing world which is hidden in plain sight before us, if only we will take the time to look.

Michael's new exhibition celebrates the life of Mabel Russell, Ditchling's sweetheart of the First World War. Mabel was a star at the Gaiety Theatre in the early years of the 20th century and crackly recordings of her 1916 song, 'A Broken Doll', were heard with great emotion by the frontline troops who had access to wind-up gramophones. Later in life she became a Member of Parliament, the third English woman to penetrate that male enclave! Later again she retired to Ditchling, where her little dog escaped and killed chickens in the Alford farmyard. Michael was dispatched to lodge a complaint. From this unpropitious start began the great love of his life and long after her death, Michael became a Mabel 'groupie', collecting theatre bills, photographs, postcards and revues, of her and all her illustrious friends. To see a selection of this archive, book a private tour with the man himself, by telephone **01273 843498** or email **stoneywishnatur-**

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ereserve@gmail.com. Please note, you may need to set aside even longer for this appointment than for the rendez-vous with the thorn tree!

Anyhow, may you have all the gifts of the thorn tree, life, love and health this May. *Rosemary*

BRIGHTON CONSORT will be presenting another programme of renaissance choral music in June. Entitled *The Lord's Song in a Strange Land*, the music is described as "polyphony for travellers, wanderers, and the displaced" and will include works by Orlando Lassus, William Byrd, John Dowland and Cipriano de Rore. There will be two performances: Wednesday **15th June** at 7.30 pm in St George's Church, Kemptown, Brighton BN2 1ED and Saturday **18th June** at 7.30 pm in the beautiful Norman church of St Mary-de-Haura, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 5DQ. Tickets can be purchased online via the Brighton Consort website **www.brightonconsort.org.uk/index.htm** - go to the "Next Concerts" page), or by ringing **01273 833746**, or on the door. Please also see more details about Brighton Consort on their Facebook pages **www.facebook.com/brightonconsort**.

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JAZZ AND BLUES CONCERT with Julie Roberts, Michael Hinton and Herbie Flowers - in aid of British Heart Foundation - was planned for Sunday 10th April, in Ditchling Village Hall.

The setbacks - Ten days before the concert Herbie phoned to say that he was very sorry, but he was indisposed and could not take part in the concert. We were very lucky that an outstanding bass player, Terry Pack, was available and willing to play on that date.

We had to take down posters in local villages and replace them with new ones, inform the online ticket sales and all our contacts of the change. In spite of some returned tickets, we sold out and looked forward to playing to a full house.

On the morning of the concert Michael Hinton phoned to say that he had woken with a fever and had tested positive for covid. He suggested that we should phone pianist, Mike Hatchard, as a pianist who had the ability to make a success of a performance without preparation, although he (Michael Hinton) would make available all his carefully prepared chord charts for every song in the show.

Show rescued Julie phoned Mike who was about to leave home to rehearse the Shoreham Singers by Sea choir in Shoreham. In spite of a full morning's schedule Mike readily agreed to take on the challenge.

By 2 pm the stage was set and Mike, Terry and Julie could have a quick look at the chord charts. At 2.30 pm the doors opened with much of the programme still unseen by Mike.



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At 3 pm I introduced the show and explained that we had an extraordinary situation which relied particularly on Mike Hatchard's musical talent and quick thinking to carry the show through - and of course the nimbleness of singer and bass player to work with an accompanist working without preparation.

The show began. The atmosphere was charged with an unusual degree of hope, fear, and excitement.

Mike especially, but also Julie and Terry, were by general agreement, amazing. The warmth, humour, musical variety, and talent of the performers delighted everyone present.

Money raised - We are still awaiting a couple of invoices but it is clear that the concert raised over £1000 for the British Heart Foundation, money that will go to fund further research into the prevention and treatment of heart disease, strokes, vascular dementia, high blood pressure and related circulatory problems.

A big thank you to all of you who came and supported the cause.
David Roberts

DITCHLING HISTORY PROJECT SUMMER

TRAIL Growing and Showing in Ditchling 1822 - 2022, Celebrating the Bicentenary of Ditchling Horticultural Society. How did the Society begin and who grew the heaviest gooseberries? Who kept a pig in the High Street and where was Harris's fair? Look out for our summer trail between July and September to find the answers and discover more about two centuries of growing and showing in the village.
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HURST PLAYERS Towards the end of July Hurst Players will present three plays from the first selection of six monologues written by Alan Bennett under the title "Talking Heads" and originally performed on BBC Television in 1987. Another six plays formed series two in 1998 with more written and broadcast in 2020. From a total of fifteen monologues, the Players' director, Ian Amos has selected the three to be performed in July – Bed among the Lentils, A Chip in the Sugar and A Lady of Letters. How to select just three from the selection available? Ian Amos outlines his reasons:

"Although written for television and portrayed over the years by a 'who's who of distinguished actors, Alan Bennett quickly responded to the initial reaction of television audiences by adapting them for radio and, of course, for the stage. In their simplicity – a single voice selling a single story – there is also complexity. They are demanding of the performer but also require the audience to focus, fill in and follow a single-strand of a story. I am delighted to be asked to direct these three monologues in my first venture with Hurst Players."

The three plays selected for performance at The Players Theatre in July deal with a variety of subjects – some of which would be familiar to audiences of the



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mid-80s and may seem different to us today – but they all have common, instantly recognisable themes. The **Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd July** performances begin at 7.30 pm and there will be an afternoon performance on Sunday **24th July** starting at 2.30 pm. Apparently the weekend matinee performance is all the rage in the West End – so we'd like to try it out!

Please join us at the Players Theatre, 147 High Street, Hurstpierpoint – we have been without you for so long. More information is available on our website: www.hurstplayers.com where you will find details of how and when to book.

Anne Hopper

SUSSEX CHORUS Saturday **25th June** at 7.30 pm.
St Andrew's Church, Burgess Hill. RH15 0LG
Centenary Opera Gala Concert, Conductor - Stephen Anthony Brown, Soloists - Zita Syme (soprano). Kent Sinfonia

We shall be singing popular songs from works by Bizet, Puccini & Verdi and celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with: Zadok the Priest Jerusalem and Land of Hope & Glory.

Tickets available from **01444 412579**, Burgess Hill Help Point, Carousel Music & website: www.sussex-chorus.org.

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BUNTY'S POEM How many of us can relate to the contents of this poem which was written by the late Bunty Higginbottom who was a founder member of concert party Friends and Neighbours. She wrote it for one of our Spring concerts and was adamant that it actually happened to her. Hope you like it!

Dorrie

POT PLANTS

Have you ever had a pot plant as a present or a prize

or won one in a raffle and thought 'That's rather nice'

Well I have

Did you take it home and put it on a shelf for all to see

And stand back and admire

it and wonder what on earth it could be?

Well I did

And did you look through all your Gardening Books to find what it was called

And out of all those wondrous names

learn it was a Flaming Sword

Well mine was

When you found out what it was called did you study all you could

On how you ought

to tend it give it water and plant food?

Well I did

But did you chatter to your pot plant give it news and pass the time of day

And praise it night and

mornning as you went upon your way?

Well did you?

And did it just ignore you turn yellow and start to wilt

And all its petals drop

off and its stem begin to tilt?

Well mine did

So I got into a paddy and pulled it from the pot

And chucked it on the

compost and told it "That's your lot"

I really did

Now my compost's a blaze of colour - as ye sow so shall ye reap

I've got a little side line

'Selling pot plants very cheap.

©Bunty Higginbottom

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A WEAVING OF JAZZ JEWELS AND POETRY

Pianist Joss Peach and I are delighted to be putting on another intimate, jazzy and poetic fundraising gig (an early evening 'giglet' really) for South Downs Refugee Project.

There'll be a mix of music and a peppering of spoken word pieces - some newly written - and I'm looking forward to sharing them with you. It seems I have emerged from lockdowns as a vocalist/poet, having been scribbling away, and am now working towards publishing a collection of poetry and prose. Some of you may have previously been to our performances in this setting - it's glorious!

It would be a delight to see you on Saturday **18th June** from 6 pm to 7.30 pm at Holy Trinity Church, High Street, Hurstpierpoint to reserve a ticket email margaret@112a.co.uk or telephone **01273 835113**. Fundriaser for Holy Trinity Church and South Downs Refugee Project.

Lou Beckerman

STALL FOR UKRAINE what a lovely afternoon this turned out to be! The sun shone, the stores were busy and everyone I spoke to said that they had sold a lot of items and I understand over £14,000 was raised.

During the afternoon the trishaw came along. A lady came out and asked me, as did the driver and escort Bridget, if I would like a ride and fill the wind in my hair? I was rather windswept afterwards. We went up to Keymer and back along Dale Avenue. I can recommend this novel form of transport. Bridget told me that they would like more passengers and I will pass the word around. If anyone would like to try it, telephone Bridget on **01273 833606** or **07929 294640**.

Suzanne Glossop

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HURSTPIERPOINT HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

We meet on the last Friday evening of each month, September to May inclusive. Our meetings take place in the Guide Hall next to Trinity Road car park. We always have a presentation by an expert speaker on a subject of historic or geographic interest, usually concerning Sussex but sometimes from wider afield. For example, on **23rd September** there will be a presentation called "The Titanic, One Man's Journey" by Rob Goldsmith. And on **28th October** Paul Green, formerly of the Argus, will give his talk "A Step Back in Time" about Sussex from 1880 onwards. We are currently seeking new members including a few who are willing to help us run our very friendly society. If you would like to join us please contact me - telephone **01273 832280**, e-mail **w.kent123@btinternet.com**. At the time of writing there are a few places left for our tour of Firle Place on **27th June**. If you would like to join us, please contact me as soon as possible.

Bill Kent, Chairman

YOUNG PEOPLE WORKING TO IMPROVE THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD

visited their local garden centre to select a commemorative tree. Members of the Sussex Clubs for Young People went to South Downs Nurseries in Hassocks and chose an oak to plant next month. The tree was donated to them by the Budding Foundation, a Sussex charity which works to improve the lives of young people.

The Hurstpierpoint Mini Community Ambassadors thanked the charity's founder, Clive Gravett who said it was always a pleasure to help children to connect with nature and encourage their enthusiasm for trees and plants.



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The planting ceremony has now taken place in the grounds of Court Bushes Community Hub.

Clive Gravett





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THE BEACON PARISH OF DITCHLING, STREAT & WESTMESTON

Do come and join us at a Special Street Tea Party on Saturday 4th June, to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in Church Lane, Ditchling from 3 pm. Everyone welcome to join us for food, fun, meeting old friends and making new ones.

Sunday Worship will be at St. Margaret's, Ditchling on **5th, 12th and 26th June** at 10 am. On Sunday 19th June, we'll be at St. Martin's Church, Westmeston. We look forward to welcoming you to these services and to Wednesday at 10 am, in St. Margaret's each week. (Please check website <https://www.beaconparish.co.uk/service> s for any changes.)
Sherrian Guest

WEEDS ARE A CONSTANT PROBLEM FOR GARDENERS AND PROFESSIONAL GROWERS, but by no means a recent one as a new display at the museum of gardening in hassocks reveals.

The latest exhibition to be installed at the museum focuses on weed control through the ages. It includes a rare 1920s' Atco Turf replacing weeder, along with a Wikeham weed eradicator, patented

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in the late 1800's. There are also two examples of the 'Daisy Grubber' a handy tool first mentioned in 1850.

We hope to explain the ongoing difficulties that weeds have caused both the enthusiast and commercial grower. We are very excited to have not only acquired but been able to put on public display these rather rare examples of tackling weeds in the past.

The museum is at the South Downs Heritage Centre on Brighton Road in Hassocks. Admission is free and further details are on the museum's website: www.museumofgardening.co.uk

Clive Gravett



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THANK YOU We would like to say thank you to the following people Mrs Barbara Hornby, Maria Angelaki-King & Roz French who have been delivering your magazines in Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint. Thank you for all your help.

Editors

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO BRING BACK DOWNSFEST 2022,

especially after two years of lockdown. Friday **15th July** is Comedy Night brought to you by Funny That Comedy with Stephen Grant, Stephen K. Amos, and Nick Helm to name a few. Saturday **16th July** is our music festival with headliners One Step Behind, the Master of Madness, and introducing our new Family Zone where we will have a full afternoon's program of inclusive activities as well as a variety of festival stalls.

Besides having lots of fun, we are also hoping to raise loads of much-needed funds for St Peter and St James Hospice.

For more information and to purchase your tickets for these events please go to **www.downsfest.co.uk** and find us on Facebook and Instagram.

The Downsfest Team

A CONCERT FOR UKRAINE AT DANNY HOUSE

A reminder that the Ditchling-based choir Vivace! will perform a concert in aid of Ukraine in the Great Hall at Danny House, Hurstpierpoint on **15th June** at 7.30 pm.

Tickets are available from Suzy Smith, email

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suzy4restoration@hotmail.com or ring **01444 471363**. The grounds at Danny House will be open from 6.30 pm and doors open at 7 pm. All proceeds are to the DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.

Richard Ware

TREFOIL GUILD Our April meeting was all about board games.

Members brought along their favourites, and we had lots of fun!

Our May meeting was all about the Queens Platinum Jubilee.

On **15th June** we have a walk around Ditchling led by one of our members.

We meet at the Guide Hall, Semley Road at 7.45 pm for 8 pm on the 3rd Wednesday in the month.

Visitors welcome. Call **07546 495433**. *Pam*

DITCHLING FAIR 'JOY AND JUBILATION'

2022 Saturday **18th June**. After two years of pandemic, and consequently a cancelled 2020 fair, it will be four years since we all came together to raise funds for Ditchling Village Association which does so much good for the community.

Whats happening - Dressing up, stepping out early, staying out late. Admiring the speed - and laughing at the costumes - of the Jack and Jill racers. Watching grown men and women battle in the Tug of War and singing shoulder to shoulder at the bar. Watching your kids dance in the sunshine, and your parents dance in the moonlight. Marvelling at the history of Harris's funfair. See you there.

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~~~ WHAT'S ON IN JUNE ~~~

Clubs, Societies & Groups please let us have your programmes and/or events to **PUBLISH FREE** in this section. Email ed@villagemagazines.co.uk or send to **QD Stationery 52 Keymer Road, Hassocks, West Sussex BN6 8AR.**

For more information call **01273 846978.**

1st HURST MONTHLY SOCIAL GROUP Guide HQ, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, earlier start 1 pm for Fish and Chips which must be pre-ordered. 2 pm AGM, quiz, tea and cake. Guests welcome from 2 pm.

1st ST MARGARET'S CHURCH Ditchling, 10 am. Holy Communion

2nd MEMORY MOMENTS CAFE Court Bushes Community Centre, Willow Way, Hurstpierpoint 2 pm - 4 pm. Know Dementia, Education, Advice & Support. To book call 01273 494300.

2nd DITCHLING FILM SOCIETY Ditchling Village Hall, 7.30 pm. Petite Maman - Cert PG. Guests welcome.

4th AGE CONCERN, Hassocks, 12 - 2 pm. Join us to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Buffet lunch, music, quiz. Call 01273 844461 to book.

4th BEACON PARISH OF DITCHLING & WEST-



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MESTON Church Lane, Ditchling, 3 pm. Special Street Tea Party all welcome.

5th SAYERS COMMON JUBILEE CELEBRATION Jubilee Party in the Park. Live music, food available, games competitions, play area.

5th ST MARGARET'S CHURCH Ditchling, 10 am. Sunday Worship and Holy Communion

6th KEYMER FOLK DANCE CLUB Ditchling Green & Barn. 7 - 9 pm. Summer Dance. Traditional Social Dancing caller Sean Goddard with live music. Visitors welcome.

7th DITCHLING DOWNS WI Ditchling Village Hall 7 pm. 'The Lifestyles of the Duke & Duchess of Windsor' - Janice Ramsey.

8th ST MARGARET'S CHURCH Ditchling, 10 am. Holy Communion

8th HASSOCKS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 8 pm. 'From Field to Fork' - Nicola Crittenden. All welcome.

10th MID SUSSEX AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY Jack and Jill Mill Car Park, 7.30 - 9.30 pm www.msars.org.uk.

12th ST MARGARET'S CHURCH Ditchling, 10 am. Sunday Worship and Holy Communion

14th ROYAL BRITISH LEGION, DITCHLING BRANCH Ditchling War Memorial, 11 am. Brief service of commemorating the end of the Falklands War.

14th LUNCHTIME JAZZ Hassocks Hotel, 12 pm. Lunch included to book call 01273 841110.

15th ST MARGARET'S CHURCH Ditchling, 10 am. Holy Communion

15th BRIGHTON CONSORT St George's Church, Kemptown 7.30 pm. Renaissance Choral Music. Tickets 01273 833746.

15th VIVACE Danny House, New Way Lane, 6.30 pm. Concert in aid of Ukraine. Tickets 01444 471363.

15th HASSOCKS TREFOIL GUILD Guide Hut, Semley Road, Hassocks 7.45 pm. Walk around Ditchling led by one of our members. Visitors welcome.

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16th DITCHLING FILM SOCIETY Ditchling Village Hall, 7.30 pm. Final Account - Cert PG 13. Guests welcome.

18th JAZZ JEWELS & POETRY Holy Trinity Church, Hurstpierpoint 7.30 pm. Joss Peach & Lou Beckerman. Fundraiser for the Church & South Downs Refugee Project. Tickets 01273 835113.

18th BRIGHTON CONSORT St Mary de Haura Church, Shoreham by Sea 7.30 pm. Renaissance Choral Music. Tickets 01273 833746.

18th DITCHLING FAIR Ditchling Green, Ditchling. Raising funds for Ditchling Village Association.

19th MID SUSSEX AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY, St Johns Park, Burgess Hill 11 am - 4 pm. Burgess Hill Town Day. www.msars.org.uk.

19th HURSTPIERPOINT OPEN GARDENS Various Venues 1 - 5.30 pm. Raising money for St Peter and St James Hospice look out for posters around the village for more info.

19th ST MARTIN'S CHURCH Westmeston, 10 am. Sunday Worship and Holy Communion

21st DITCHLING VILLAGE ASSOCIATION Ditchling Village Hall 9.45 - 11 am. Coffee morning hosted by Horticultural Society. All welcome.

22nd ST MARGARET'S CHURCH Ditchling, 10 am. Holy Communion

22nd - 24th HURST PLAYERS Players Theatre, High Street, Hurstpierpoint, various performances. 'Talking Heads' by Alan Bennett visit www.hurstplayers.com to book.

24th HDD U3A Court Bushes Community Hub, Hurstpierpoint, 2 pm. 'Brunel - Father, Son & Grandson' - Bill Mc Naught. Guests welcome.



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24th MID SUSSEX AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY Millfield Suite, Cyprus Hall, Burgess Hill 7.45 - 9.45 pm www.msars.org.uk.

25th HAS SOCKS VILLAGE MARKET National Tyres Forecourt, 9 am - 1 pm. Local produce, bread, honey, cheese, wine, veg etc.

25th HURSTPIERPOINT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY Hurstpierpoint Village Centre, 2.15 pm. Summer Show.

25th REPAIR CAFE United Reformed Church, Hassocks, 10 am - 1 pm. Bring items for repair book your slot call 01273 040110 or www.hkdtransition.org.uk.

25th SUSSEX CHORUS St Andrews Church, Burgess Hill 7.30 pm. Centenary Opera Gala Concert. Tickets 01444 412579.

25th BURGESS HILL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY Cyprus Hall, Burgess Hill 1.30 pm. Summer Show.

25th DOWNLANDS SCHOOL Dale Avenue, Hassocks 12 - 4 pm. Summer Fayre.

26th ST MARGARET'S CHURCH Ditchling, 10 am. Sunday Worship and Holy Communion

29th ST MARGARET'S CHURCH Ditchling, 10 am. Holy Communion

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STEVE'S BACK PAGE GOSSIP

Ok Folks – This is it, are you ready? Let's go!

Happy Birthday to me, Happy Birthday to me, Happy Birthday dear Stevie, Happy Birthday to me! 24th May 1952 which incidentally is the same year our Queen was crowned and now it's her Platinum Jubilee which I am sure a great deal of you will be out celebrating and enjoying all the planned events – have a great time.

Remember last month I told you I'd had a letter and form from the DVLA saying that as I'd reached 70 I had to re-apply for my driving licence which was ok, but one of the questions was would I be prepared to donate my organs? Obviously, I answered yes but when you reach a certain age things don't work so well any more so I really can't imagine what bits if me they could possibly find a use for and if they did the poor person would wake up the next morning barking like a fox and spraying like a tom cat!!

It's going to be interesting to see what happens to McColl's. Our branch here is very important to the village because it's got the Post Office inside so I can't see them closing it down. It has been rumoured Morrisons may take it over but it is only a rumour and Sainsbury's deliver all the stock, mind you it has got a lot of empty shelves at the moment so for the sake of our Post Office and all the staff let's all keep our fingers crossed it has a happy ending.

There has been a lot of measuring up and clearing up over at National Tyres we could be heading for a bit of a face lift and perhaps a Halfords sign that would be nice.

You know one day I'm going to walk into Hassocks Hardware and they aren't going to have what I want – but it hasn't happened yet! We are so lucky to have them in our village. Standalone Hardware stores are very rare these days so as I always say, support your local shops. Running a bricks and mortar business these days is not an easy thing so, we are grateful for every penny you spend with us.

I find myself in a lot of strange situations sometimes and end up not knowing the best solutions to the problem – here's one for you – the mound at the end of our row of shops which is owned by Wilmington Close residents is a magnet for school children, especially late afternoons, and early evenings. Most of the time they just shout and play around but, just lately they have started throwing bottles and being a pain. So, you ask them nicely to stop, sometimes they stop, sometimes they call you names and sometimes they don't but what can you do? Your hands are tied.

However, just the other day some kids on the mound who seemed to be doing nothing naughty spotted a young family pushing a wheelchair and started shouting hurtful words at them which was just the worst thing to witness. The family sensibly ignored them and kept moving, but what would you do or more to the point what could you do? Not an easy one you have to be careful these days, I decided confrontation was not the best answer, it would achieve nothing, but at the same time what they'd done wrong needed to be explained to them.

It's very heart-warming to hear so many families in Ditchling and Hassocks are opening their arms and homes to take in families fleeing the war in Ukraine. I'm not sure of the numbers but I understand it's quite a few, I have nothing but admiration for people who do this they really are a credit to our community.

Now that I've reached the status of the oldest shopkeeper in town, I do get asked what my plans are for the future. Well, my plan is to stay vertical for as long as I can and to avoid being horizontal as much as possible. Sadly, unless you've got a really good private pension - which I haven't – then for a lot of us we've reached the era of work till you drop because the way the cost of living is going, I can't see any other option!

On that cheerful note I'll love you and leave you and hope you remain healthy and happy till we meet again.

Steve

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