May 2026

THE LINK







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- treading the boards
- Baa Ram Ewe
- what a load of rubbish
- what's on

...and so much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

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Welcome to the May Link

"Nay cast a clout 'til May is out" - which I'm reliably informed means "don't plant outside until the May/ hawthorn blossom is in bloom" (which will be soon) - NOT that we should wait until the end of May. So off we go - the Hort plant sale at Hever Village Hall well timed for 9 May.

As I write in mid April (refraining from casting clouts and whilst walking the dogs and trying not to fall into any holes) I am enjoying a sparkling green ocean of wide bladed grass, the greens darkening as they become more distant, just as the blue sea goes grey. And the green 5 o'clock shadow on the trees is now burgeoning into stubble. The willows were the first to come into bright yellow leaf, here they are surrounding the Japanese tea house on Hever Castle lake.

Hever Castle has distinguished itself in two respects, first by being the third most visited of Historic Houses (houses owned independently from the National Trust) and, second, by inspiring a new variety of daffodil, the "Hever Castle". Caterpillars don't seem to have much truck with daffodils and we are told we must learn to love them and not exterminate them as they munch their way through the nasturtiums - because of course therein lie the butterflies. The UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme has witnessed a worrying decline in numbers of many species but a rise in Red Admirals which are benefitting from climate change by avoiding the need to undertake the incredible journey to North Africa over the winter. What is more, the rewilding at Knepp has resulted in triumphant numbers of Purple Emperors, the UK's second largest butterfly.

Back to yellow... on another walk I met a couple collecting dandelions for dandelion jam, not something I had heard of before. Apparently it is known as "the poor man's honey" with a delicate, floral taste. The down sides: you need 2.5 cups of *petals* (not whole flowers) to make three small jars and you are depriving the bees, which make actual honey, of forage.

Joanna Wade
thelink@hever.org



what I do

The dream of making your West End debut is common amongst actors and I was lucky enough that it came true last June. I'm Ed Shamwana and I'm currently an understudy in 'The Play that Goes Wrong' at the Duchess Theatre. The show has been running for over eleven years now and has become beloved in the industry.



Growing up in rural Chiddingstone, it's unsurprising that there was no obvious route to acting for me. For a long time, it was a prospect that felt just too unattainable to consider seriously. The big change came as I reached the end of secondary school and realised that I hadn't considered the idea of doing anything else! Drama Schools in the UK are daunting places and getting a spot at a conservatoire is almost as competitive as getting a job at the other end. Blissfully ignorant of this, I pressed on and after re-auditioning I secured a place on the BA in Acting at the Guildford School of Acting, graduating in 2023. For actors, there are very few West End jobs in long running non-musical shows like 'The Mousetrap' and Mischief Theatre's flagship, 'The Play That Goes Wrong'. Because of this, I was taken aback and excited when I was asked to audition for the latter, especially as it had always been a dream to be a part of that company - so when I got offered the role of understudy I was over the moon. I attend the theatre every day to cover five principal roles and have done more than 140 performances, sometimes with little or no notice.

My year at the Duchess Theatre finishes this month and I've been surprised by the things which have stuck with me. 'Showbiz' has a certain reputation: for facades, two-facedness, opulence and perhaps even skullduggery. Whilst I'm sure much of this is true, the experience I've had is of camaraderie and trust. But most rewarding is feeling able in some small way, to pay back all the trust and faith others have placed in me along my journey to the stage: the understanding of my friends when I miss the 100th social gathering in a row because I have to work and the support both from my parents whilst I pursued the most uncertain of industries and, most importantly, from the people who've watched me grow. As I get ready to leave the Duchess the prospect of starting the job hunt all over again ignites a certain pang in the stomach, but the great possibility of the unknown is too exciting miss!

Ed Shamwara

lambs of the month

You may have seen Nick and Helen Hoggins with their black Dexter cattle at the Hever School fete or dressed in crisp white coats showing them at the Oxted and Edenbridge show. Their Newlands herd has won many prizes at that show and nationally as their prize board shows.



They also have sheep and have been running lambing weekends from the farm for the last few years. Six hundred people visited over an April weekend to see around 60 lambs and their mothers gamboling around, with plenty of opportunity for cuddles in the big straw filled barn. The event is organised so that the sheep don't get stressed by too many visitors at a time and other attractions include a rescue feral cat brought in from Battersea to keep vermin under control and two impeccably trained collies - Meg who herds sheep and Rufus who specialises in cattle. The event raises money for the Edenbridge Piranhas swimming club too ....



Local sheep owners, including us, are grateful to Nick for being the collection point for wool after shearing - it is still a statutory requirement of the British Wool Board that fleeces are collected and sold to them though sadly the price paid is lower than the cost of shearing the sheep!

Joanna Wade



Nick and Helen Hoggins

our mum - Kath Pocock

How can we possibly condense 99 and a half years of a well lived life into a few words? Mum was born on 31st August 1926 and grew up in Crowborough. She left school at 14 - that was usual back then - and worked as a housemaid for a few years - a job she never enjoyed much. Her brother Peter was adopted at 15 months old, a homeless child who Mum always regarded as a true brother. She married Dad, John Pocock in 1950, when she was 23. Dad was a wireless operator in the Royal Navy and they met in a pub. He came from a big family so her's suddenly got much bigger. After seven years Geraldine arrived on the scene and then Michael 3 1/2 years later. Life ticked along with Dad working at a garage, then as a security officer at The Diplomatic Wireless Service at Kingstanding on Ashdown Forest. Mum was then a full time Mum. In 1968, we moved from Crowborough to Bough Beech when Dad went into partnership and bought Chequers Garage. Mum must have served thousands of gallons of petrol over the next few years and became very well known to both locals and the workmen constructing Bough Beech reservoir. She loved being involved in the local community. She was one of the founder members of the Chiddingstone WI and enjoyed seeing all her friends there and at the over 60s club - in fact she was more than 30 years over 60!! Thanks go to all her many friends - you know who you are.



Vincent motorbikes played a huge part in Mum's life. Mum loved motorbikes and was always on the back of one - from the ages of about 5 to 90. She watched Michael compete at scrambling and motocross for many years. Annual rallies for the Vincent Owners Club and The Bexley Gropers Motorcycle Club took place over 45 years, first at Chequers and then at Brasted Lands and continue to this day - albeit on a much reduced scale. Mum, Dad and the Vincents also went overseas with the club to rallies in Canada, Holland and Germany. There were also trips to Scotland and of course the motorbike mecca of the Isle of Man.

In 1978 we moved just a mile up the road to Brasted Lands Farm in Hever. We all still live there to this day. Sadly, we lost Dad very suddenly and unexpectedly in 1983, hugely devastating to us all. It's hard to believe that it was such a long time ago - 43 years. Mum decided she wanted to see

a bit more of the world and travelled with her friend, Joan Collins, to Australia via India and Thailand, very adventurous at the time. At the age of about 50 she decided she wanted to get an O level so she studied and took the exam in English. She passed and was so happy with her achievement. In 1994 Mum became a grandmother for the first time - as soon as Samuel could ride and was old enough to compete at motocross, Mum would be there, travelling miles in the van to support him. She was so proud when he started winning races - but even if he hadn't won, he would still be the best in her eyes. Jack was born in 1995. Mum had had plenty of practice and was a fully fledged granny by then - when he started motocross she had double worries, nervously watching both and fearing for their safety. Mum would be so happy to know that Jack and his fiancée have adopted her cat Willow who is gradually settling into her new home.

Then in 1997, a granddaughter - Tiffany, her first grandchild to get married - Mum was up on the dance floor celebrating with everyone else right to the very end of the evening. One of Mum's last knitting projects was a little pink cardigan for her great granddaughter - Lola. A particularly happy period of her life was teaching knitting and sewing to the children at Chiddingstone School for 20 years. Her title was "School Granny" and when we were out and about children would run up and chat to " Granny Pocock". Mum never put herself first. She was always there when we needed her - baby sitting, pet sitting, mending and washing - she loved being wanted. She hated becoming frail and dependent and not having the strength to enjoy her walks round the field to pick blackberries and see the sheep. We are so proud of our Mum for being so independent for so long and at such a grand age.



Kath with grandson Samuel

We are so thankful that we had you, Mum, for nearly all our lives. We hope that you are now with all your family and friends from your long life. Love you Mum - that was the last thing we said to you - and we mean it from the bottom of our hearts. X

Geraldine and Michael Pocock

a tribute to Tim Boyle

Tim Boyle, with his wife Mary a resident of Markbeech for 55 years, died in March aged 90. He was born in Lancashire and in his Link article about his war memories he recalled "at the time I was living in a mill town where my father was a police constable. Darwen had suffered badly during the depression in the cotton industry of the 1930s and the joke became that the German bombers flew over without dropping bombs because they judged that 'someone had visited there already'." The family moved to East Anglia when Tim was 12, and at a joint school event with Mary's London school, she picked Tim's name out of a hat to partner her at table tennis. They did not get on so she was surprised when he turned up in London with a box of After Eights! After that they became close, Tim paying six shillings and sixpence to travel from Colchester to London, once to take Mary to the Proms which she loved. Tim left school in 1954 and did national service in the navy, visiting every country in the Mediterranean except Albania and Israel. He then studied history at University College London followed by an MA in Cambridge.

The Boyles married in 1961 and set up home first in north London, but with Tim teaching at Goldsmiths College in south London, they decided to move south with their two sons. House hunting brought them to Markbeech and a two-up, two-down cowman's cottage which they named "Jersey Cottage", later expanding it considerably. They soon made friends and threw themselves into local activities, Mary was parish clerk for eight years and Tim sat on both the parish council and the village hall committee and wrote a definitive history of Markbeech for the millennium. They also travelled all over the world and kept up their shared love of music. Tim retired from Goldsmiths in 2001 after a distinguished 35 year career specialising in British foreign policy in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Both their children live quite nearby, Nick a surgeon and Robert a lawyer and Tim and Mary left Markbeech in 2023 to live near Nick in Withyham. Tim was very proud of his family and their seven grandchildren. Do look at the back copies of The Link on Hever.org, Tim's war stories in May 2020 (Mary's in June), his potted history of Markbeech in September and October 2020 and a celebration of Tim and Mary's 60th wedding anniversary in December 2021.





Hever Rose and Horticultural Society
plant sale
Saturday, 9th May 2026 - Hever Village Hall 10am
Refreshments and raffle - all welcome

give back to your community

Chair of Trustee Committee – Chiddingstone Nursery CIO

Chiddingstone Nursery is seeking a friendly, organised and committed chairperson to share leadership of this much-loved village nursery. The nursery is run as a not-for-profit Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) committed to providing high quality and affordable pre-school provision to the local community.

The Chair (or Co-Chairs) work alongside the Treasurer and committee members with responsibility for the strategic direction of the nursery and oversight of the finances. They provide support to the Nursery Leader through structured supervisions and ensure strong governance and compliance. This is an unpaid volunteer trustee role, ideal for someone who enjoys collaborative working and making a practical difference in our community.

Countless families have benefitted from our wonderful nursery and we are looking for members of the local community who are interested in ensuring the nursery is open for future generations of local children. For more information please contact: co-chairs@chiddingstonenursery.co.uk

Hever Village Hall open day!
Saturday, 13th June 3- 5.30pm





Comment on plans for your new hall,
meet Mr. Tumble and Simon the donkeys
and prize winning Dexter cattle,
tea and cakes, games, craft stalls, raffle and
dog with the waggiest tail competition

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Sunday 14th June
Chiddingstone Open Garden Tour
Enjoy a great afternoon in the lovely parish of Chiddingstone. The Chiddingstone Open Garden Tour, in aid of the two Chiddingstone churches will take place on 14th June from 2-6 pm. Nine village gardens will be open with Pimms at one garden and tea on offer at two others. Tickets and maps will be available to purchase at the Chiddingstone and Chiddingstone Causeway stores or at the gardens on the day. £10 (children free) - please come and wander around and enjoy these hidden gardens.

hever rose & horticultural society spring show

Our first show of the year was held on 11th April and despite worries that many of the Daffodils would be past their best we had a record number of entries across all classes. The daffodils were shown in a wide variety of forms and the Alan Townsend cup for the most points across the classes was won by Jane Rosam. We had a new cup this year, the Margaret Bates Cup for the Tulip classes presented by her daughter Helen Rahn in memory of Margaret who was a stalwart supporter of the society and longtime committee member. There were some superb exhibits, the inaugural winner of the cup was Mary Pocock,

There were many exhibits in the flowering shrubs class with the judge saying that in another year any of the 8 entries could have won but this year it was Pauline Radford who prevailed. The flower arranging classes had fewer entries this year but didn't lack quality and the Ann Bellamy Award went to Sue Butcher for her stunning display. Finally the domestic classes were well supported with entries for lime marmalade, bread and treacle tarts. The Mavis Seal salver was won by Jackie Dunkley.



Mary Pocock and Hort president Jan Tolfree

It was good to see a lot of visitors enjoying the display of flowers, tea and cakes and of course the raffle. Our next event is a PLANT SALE on 9th May 10am at Hever Village Hall. We will have a wide range of annuals, perennials, houseplants and vegetables. We would love to see you there.

David Dutton
acting chair of Hever Hort



Saturday 30th May 7pm Edenbridge Parish Church
The London Flute Quintet
works by J. S. Bach, Rameau, Ravel, Faure, Poulenc and Charlie Parker
Tickets £15 (free for under-12s accompanied by an adult)
available from Alec Crowe (07821 683 482 or secretary.emat@gmail.com or from the website, www.edenbridgemusicandartstrust.co.org

don't feed the birds



Mary Poppins would be shocked to hear this exhortation from the RSPB.... Justin Rowlatt, the BBC's climate editor, was not victim to an April fool when he reported that putting up birdfeeders could be exposing some species to serious risk. The RSPB advises us to avoid feeding seeds and peanuts between 1 May and 31st October because feeders can become disease hot spots for the serious disease trichomonosis which has caused a sharp decline in birds such as greenfinches and chaffinches. The greenfinch population has dropped from a ranking of seven in 1979, when the Great British Birdwatch began, to 18th in 2025 and they are now on the red list of endangered species. Chaffinch numbers have dropped by 30-49% in a decade.

Trichomonosis is caused by a parasite that affects the mouth, throat and upper digestive tracts of birds and can make it hard for them to eat, drink or breathe. Infected birds shed the parasite in their saliva and poo, contaminating food sources when they feed. It can also be passed directly to chicks when adults regurgitate food. So think about being cruel to be kind.. or at the very least disinfecting your feeders regularly.

PS Don't forget to get up early for National Dawn Chorus day on 3rd May

10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Badgers RUGBY PRESENT

SATURDAY 16th MAY @2PM

THE

BEN CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON

MEMORIAL RUGBY MATCH

Join us at Chiddingstone Sports Ground for a day of rugby, community and celebration. The festival will feature:

CHIDDINGSTONE BADGERS vs A VISITING XV	U12s BADGERS MATCH, CAPTAINED BY LOUIS	KIDS AND FAMILY TOUCH-RUGBY MATCHES

BBQ, BAR & MUSIC THROUGHOUT THE DAY

This special event is held in memory of Ben Campbell-Johnston, and we'll be raising funds for Jigsaw South East, Kent Wooden Spoon and Star Scheme in his honour.

GET INVOLVED!

If you'd like to play, please contact Dan Brown at: danjbrown1978@hotmail.co.uk or Ben McKinnell at: bbmckinnell@hotmail.com
We'll also be hosting a silent auction. To donate a prize, please contact Gez Hester at: gerard.hester@gmail.com

Hever Parish Council

Your Hever Parish Council
PROUDLY REPRESENTING HEVER, MARKBEECH & FOUR ELMS
Any questions? Please contact clerk@hever.org

Your Parish Assembly, to which you are all warmly invited, is on Monday 18th May at 7pm in Four Elms Village Hall. Please join us to hear some interesting speakers, including an update from your MP, the Chair of Hever Parish Council and other local groups. It is a great opportunity to meet some of your councillors and other locals and chat over refreshments, which will be provided, at the end of the meeting.

To improve safety on our roads, if you have trees or or other foliage that overhang road signage please trim it back so the sign is not obscured. Please also trim back any overhanging foliage that is obstructing or encroaching on a pavement or footpath. In some cases KCC may have to write to residents to remind them to do this and, if no action is taken, KCC may then undertake the work and charge the homeowner.

With the much awaited better weather, lots more of us are enjoying the countryside. For those with dogs there are new rules to encourage responsible dog ownership and reduce livestock worrying and attacks. For more information visit https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-law-comes-into-force-to-protect-farm-animals-from-dog-attacks. Whilst out and about, if you notice an issue with a public footpath such as a missing sign, a blocked footpath or a stile in need of attention please report it to the Kent Public Rights of Way team https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/public-rights-of-way. There is an easy-to-use reporting tool there and a rights of way map to plan your routes.

Behind the scenes we have been working on a new website. This will be more accessible, secure and regulation compliant so watch this space! Finally, a huge thank you to the Councillors and volunteers for their time and efforts with the recent litter pick. A great job was done.

Rachael Turner Clerk and RFO
077849 12645 clerk@hever.org

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Falconhurst Weddings	01342 850526
Markbeech Village Hall	01342 850328



news from four elms primary

We've had a wonderfully busy and exciting month at Four Elms, filled with hands-on learning, outdoor adventures and plenty of creative fun. Our classes have enjoyed more fantastic trips to Bore Place and Seal Farm, where the children have been deepening their understanding of nature, farming and sustainability. A particularly special moment was getting to meet the newborn lambs, which caused great excitement across the groups! Back at school, we were treated to an incredible Rock Steady concert. The children have been working hard this term learning guitar, drums, keyboard and vocals, and they proudly performed in their very own rock bands. Their confidence, teamwork and musical talent shone on stage – a brilliant celebration of their hard work.

This month also saw the children taking part in the NEDRA "Save Our Countryside" poster competition. Inspired by local environmental issues, they produced thoughtful, creative and expressive entries that showed real care for the world around them. Alongside all these special events, there has been amazing learning happening across the school. Our youngest children have been learning about Van Gogh, exploring colour, texture and expression and creating their own stunning canvas paintings using the impasto technique. In Class 2, children have been investigating climate, working collaboratively to design and host their own 'Ultimate Quiz', packed with facts they have researched themselves. Class 3 have been developing their textile skills and have created some beautiful woven bookmarks using techniques they have practised over time. Meanwhile, Class 4 have been focusing on creative writing, with a particular emphasis on building suspense, producing gripping stories filled with tension, atmosphere and imaginative detail.

We rounded off the term with some lovely Easter celebrations. The children enjoyed nest building, egg-themed crafts and, of course, a much-anticipated Easter egg hunt! It was a joyful end to a busy and productive few weeks. As always, we are incredibly proud of how engaged, curious and enthusiastic the children have been throughout all their learning this month. What a fantastic way to welcome the spring term!

Anna Cheddie
Co-Head of School



hever's alcoholic litter louts

Avid readers of The Link will recall the beautiful picture I took of a can of "Desperados" a couple of years ago. Well, this 5.9% tequila flavoured lager is still the drink of choice for the louts of Hever. Plus laughing gas. The more temperate Four Elms area, however, prefers Coca-Cola and Red Bull, plus a pair of stilettos! As ever, cyclists don't seem to be responsible for much of the rubbish and we were very pleased to be thanked by many as they pedalled past. Each village collected over 15 bags of litter in the space of a couple of hours. We got rid of some dreadful polystyrene roofing insulation and were despondent when a pile of silver building waste was tipped only a few days later. But this was cleared by Sevenoaks within hours, a sign of their commitment to combat fly tipping. They have a target of collecting within 5 days and are currently averaging 2.5 which is great.

A disadvantage of spending hours peering into hedges is that you become very aware of how quickly it all builds up again..... There will be another litter pick in the autumn, please do join - while obviously a huge benefit to the environment it's also an interesting way to study the habits of the driving population!

Joanna Wade



church in may

Please watch out for any late changes with details of services below. Readings and full details are also at https://threespires.wordpress.com/diary/

Date & time	Service details	Sunday
3rd May 10am	All Age Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms	Easter 5
3rd May 6pm	Choral evensong Holy Trinity Markbeech	Easter 5
10th May 8am	Morning Prayer St.Peter's Hever	Easter 6
10th May 10am	Holy Communion Holy Trinity Markbeech followed by short Rogation walk	Easter 6
10th May 4pm	Forest Church St.Peter's Hever	Easter 6
14th May 7pm	Deanery Ascension Day service at St.John the Baptist Penshurst	Ascension Day
19th May 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever	Easter 7
24th May 10am	All Age Pentecost Holy Communion at St.Paul's Four Elms with the Bishop of Tonbridge	Pentecost
31st May 8am	Said Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms	Trinity Sunday
31st May 10am	Family service Holy Trinity Markbeech (Patronal Festival)	Trinity Sunday

Rector
Revd.Simon Braid
07802 809849
simonbraid@icloud.com

Administrator
Ana Roxburgh
beneficeemail@gmail.com

Wardens
Four Elms
vacancy

Hever
Mandy Yarnold
07976 281613

Markbeech
Lynnie Rowan
07881 482154
Nicki Talbot
01342 850526

Our Pentecost service at Four Elms on 24th May will be a high point when we welcome Rt.Revd.Simon Burton-Jones, Bishop of Tonbridge, who will be leading and preaching. This will be a service for all ages and we hope that as many of you as possible will be able to attend. Please also note that our Four Elms Annual Parochial church meetings will follow the Sunday morning service at Four Elms on 3rd May. Christina Hodson will be standing down as Churchwarden after many years of caring and faithful service, for which we are all extremely grateful and send our blessings and very best wishes.

Our weekly Home Group continues on Tuesdays at 7.30pm and the 'life group' for young mums will on alternate Wednesdays. Please contact Simon for details.Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone.

our rector's thoughts

Last month Artemis II travelled beyond the moon and returned safely to earth. In a world filled with such troublesome news, it's refreshing to read something more positive. It reminded me of the excitement I felt as a teenager following the Apollo lunar landings between 1969 and 1972. It seems space travel can bring to mind considerations of transcendence and this has sometimes changed many astronauts' perspectives on the world. The sight of the Earth in its entirety, bright in the deep darkness of almost infinite space, inspires awe and prompts thoughts about the meaning of our existence. Astronaut Victor Glover, pilot of the Artemis II mission, is a Christian, who, moments before disappearing behind the moon, quoted Jesus' summary of the Law: *to love God and love your neighbour as yourself* (Matthew 22:37-40). He then shared the crew's message to the world, saying: '*We love you, from the moon…We will see you on the other side.*'

When the crew first viewed the Earth from above, commander Reid Wiseman, said : "*You can see the entire globe from pole to pole… It was the most spectacular moment and it paused all four of us in our tracks…*" What an incredible perspective - no wonder astronauts have spiritual experiences. Looking at the night sky reminds me of Psalm 8: *When I consider your heavens, …the moon and the stars,… what is humankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?* The Christian Gospel declares that God does indeed care for us all. So far just twelve men have walked on the moon and with the success of Artemis II there may be more. Charlie Duke was the tenth to do so with Apollo 16. He said that people expected him to say that it had changed his life, but he was so focused on the job in hand, it didn't. But twelve years after walking on the moon, Duke committed his life to Christ. He then spent the rest of his life seeking to introduce people not to the man who walked on the moon but to the God who walked on earth. Duke said *"walking on the moon was great, but the even better walk is walking with Jesus, and we can all do that."*



As we think of the wonders and vastness of creation, back on earth, why not come and walk with us on Rogation Sunday (10th May) following our morning service in Markbeech with our traditional short walk through the beautiful countryside. I hope to see you there and at our other services, especially Pentecost Sunday (24th May) at St.Paul's Four Elms, which will be led by the Bishop of Tonbridge.

God bless you all

Simon

news from the pews

Four Elms

Coming as it does with the arrival of Spring, Easter is a joyful and glorious time. Here in St Paul's we celebrated Palm Sunday with a palm procession led by a delightful "donkey"(well actually a charming pony with some added donkey ears ridden by a very capable jockey). It was so good to have an excellent attendance and I hope we didn't disappoint. After the joy of Palm Sunday, we entered Holy Week and a sombre Good Friday devotional service which was followed by Sunrise Service on Easter morning. Despite not being a naturally early riser, I do find the peace and tranquillity, together with the morning birdsong, extremely soulful. Thank you to all who attended. In May we celebrate Pentecost, (when the Holy Spirit came to the disciples). This year the celebratory service will be held at St Paul's in the presence of Bishop Simon (Bishop of Tonbridge).

One of the iconic symbols of Christianity and peace is the dove. It was a little disconcerting when, during Holy Week, a very charming collared dove decided to make its nest in the roof eaves in the centre of our porch. With so many twigs dropping on the floor, sadly, we had to move them on but we wish them well in finding a new home. Rather like the dove, I am moving on. I step down from my role as churchwarden after six years. It has been a privilege to serve the people (for that is what a church is) of St. Paul's. However, I am continuing to oversee the churchyard and graveyard. Thank you to all who have supported me – especially my husband John and the late Richard Bennett. We have willing hands to help in the church but nobody designated yet as churchwarden. Put your hand up if you feel you would like to take on the role. With finishing as churchwarden I will also be stepping back from writing these small pieces for the Link. It may be that the correspondents vary and I may well be back for the odd line or two!! Our annual APCM will be held at 11.15am on Sunday 3rd May. Everyone is very welcome to attend. Also, please note that Enjoy a cuppa will be on Tuesday 5th May, the first Tuesday in month not the usual second Tuesday. And fitting, perhaps for me, a final reminder of the Village Fete on 11th July. Our usual church stalls invite help and contributions.

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

Hever

A big thank you to everyone who made Easter such a joyful festival. The church looked beautiful with the lovely displays of flowers, and the ever-popular Easter Egg hunt was a big success.

The PCC were pleased to be able to donate £200 towards the project to replace the turkey oak, that had to be felled last July, and the renewed fencing that surrounds it. Thank you to Amy Davies for initiating and co-ordinating this project.

A large crack has appeared and widened over the past year in the church. It is in the join of the east wall behind the altar and the south wall. It is being monitored and we engaged a structural engineer to visit, assess the fault and write a report on how we can remedy the damage. The PCC continue to make slow but steady progress with the accessibility project and the planned memorial to Queen Anne Boleyn.

We also look forward to welcoming you to the next Parish Lunch on Thursday, 14th May, at 12.30pm for a 1pm start. We typically host around 24 people for a simple meal, fruit, and delicious home-made cake. Everyone in the parish is very welcome! To help us with catering, please let us know if you plan to attend or have specific dietary requirements.

Mandy Yarnold
Churchwarden

Markbeech

While we were away, the Easter Services sounded well attended and a great success. Lovely to hear that the pony/donkey at Four Elms, ably ridden by Albi, behaved well. It reminds us of the stories of the Bible and the symbols of the Church of England. Although a lot of us were away over Easter, I understand the Family Service at Markbeech did well. Because the PCC secretary forgot, sorry, the APCM of Markbeech will probably have taken place by the time The Link is published. Simon has kindly given the details during Services, but the date is the 23rd April, 7.30 at Falconhurst.

The next Choral evensong at Markbeech is on the 3rd May at 6pm. The choir will begin practising next week and I hope it can be enjoyed by many. The following week, on the 10th May, at 10am, is Holy Communion at Holy Trinity followed by the Rogation Walk. Hopefully the bluebells will still be out but the views from the Falconhurst fields are wonderful. Thank you Nicki and Charles.

On the 24th May, the All Age Pentecost Holy Communion at St Pauls, Four Elms with Bishop Simon will take place. And, the next day, Bank Holiday Monday, Falconhurst garden is open and we will be serving delicious coffee, tea and cake; please come and enjoy it with us. Finally, this month, on the 31st May, is Trinity Sunday. Therefore, our Family Service at Holy Trinity will be a Patronal Festival.

Wishing all readers of the wonderful Link magazine, a beautiful, fresh, green-leafed May.

Janey Cooper
PCC Secretary

From the register

10th March Hever
Mollie Brudenell funeral and service

31st March Markbeech
Tim Boyle interment of ashes and memorial service

gardening

The month of May is synonymous in the gardening calendar with the spectacle that is the Chelsea Flower Show. One of the first major shows of the season and arguably the most prestigious, not only in this country, but the world. It can be the pinnacle of an individual's career and attracts the top garden designers from all corners of the globe. How Green Nursery has grown for gardens at the show and this will be our fifteenth year and maybe our last. With the increasing extremes in weather, it is more and more difficult to set a level of expectation for the designers when the plants don't know if they are coming or going! We are growing plants for seven months of the year to look at their peak for one day – judging day! That's now an almost impossible challenge! We are certainly going out with a bang, with three gardens and the Saatchi Gallery art installation.

We're growing for the following show gardens:

Parkinson's UK – A Garden for every Parkinson's Journey designed by Arit Anderson (Gardeners' World presenter). A great cause, Arit is heavily invested in the garden and charity with a close family member being a Parkinson's sufferer. The garden sets out to create a place of harmony and comfort for people and pollinators alike with jewel-like planting and a central water feature to give movement and sound.

The Plant Heritage Missing Collector Garden designed by the Planting Design Collective. The garden celebrates Plant Heritage's vital work in safeguarding cultivated plants and seeks to inspire the next generation of National Plant Collection Holders. Really tricky to grow for with lots of rare and hard to find plants!

The Young Minds Garden designed by Charlie Chase. A vibrant celebration of global botany to inspire young people and offer a restorative, purposeful community space. With many unusual and hard to find plants, focusing on yellow-flowered varieties, symbols of light and hope.

As I write, the extremes of weather are clear. We have not had any meaningful rain for six weeks now and this must be one of the driest Aprils on record. We've recently installed some giant water tanks for storage at the nursery to harvest rainwater from the glasshouses. Water is a valuable commodity and as amateur gardeners, you could do the same. Water butts are cost effective and mulching flower beds aids in moisture retention. We can all do our bit!

Simon Sutcliffe
How Green Nursery



A garden for every Parkinson's journey

benefice monthly rainfall in millimeters

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
FOUR ELMS													
2024	58	122	94	61	49	27	64.0	28	165	86	77	78	909
2025	89	61	4	36	13	28	57.0	38	49	85	66	87	613
2026	162	90	25										277
HEVER													
2024	73	136	81.5	57.5	48.5	25	73.5	31.5	183	82.5	62	52	906
2025	126	54.5	4	29.5	14	31	71.5	27	52	103	61	107	680
2026	187	88	22										296.5
MARKBEECH													
2024	80	139	95	71	61	29	62.0	44	186	77	79	60	983
2025	114	71	4	25	21	33	52.0	22	71	115	63	116	707
2026	183	92	28										303

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Hever – Karen Thomas 07747 867942 or heverhallbooking@gmail.com
Markbeech – Mrs Paige 01342 850328

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Robert.Mayall@kent.gov.uk	cllr.barnett@sevenoaks.gov.uk	12645

the link team

Bridget Harris, Joanna Wade and Ivan Furness
email: thelink@hever.org
Telephone 01732 700986 (Bridget) Mobile 07958 919 631 (Joanna)
Address 1 Triangle Cottage, Hever Road, Hever TN8 7NL
Benefice website threespires.wordpress.com **Community website** www.hever.org

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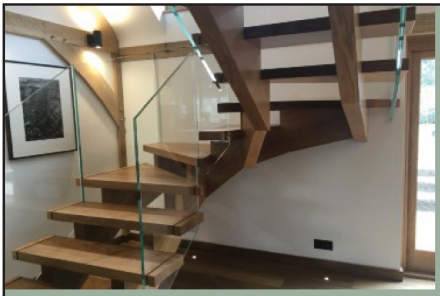
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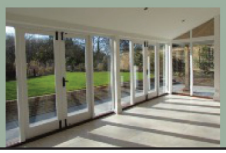
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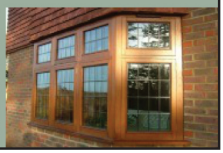
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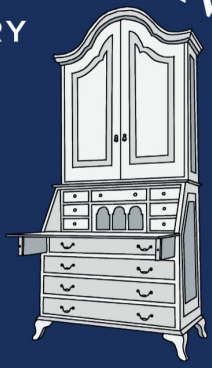




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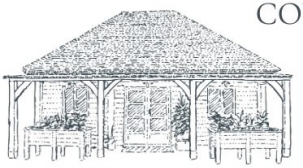
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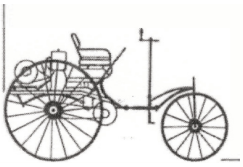
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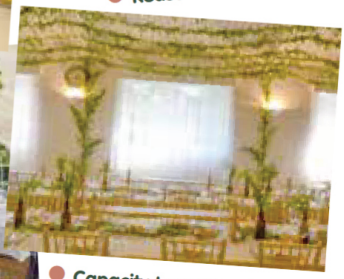


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FALCONHURST

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may diary

Eden Valley Museum celebrating 25 years with two exhibitions 'Discover History through 25 Objects' and 'Explore Change in the Eden Valley'
2nd & 4th Wed each month **Bore Place 'Wilder Wellbeing'** nature sessions for adults – free, book online www.boreplace.org/whats-on
Women's Fitness Class Mondays at 10.30am and Weds at 6pm Markbeech VH
Falconhurst Street Food at the Barn, 1st Friday and Saturday each month 12–8pm
5 to 21 June **Art in June - open studios** see advert on page 8

3 May **National Dawn Chorus Day**	dawn
3 May **Tunbridge Wells Climate and Nature Fair,** Calverley Gardens	10-5pm
5 May **Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms	from 10.45am
6 May **Hever Parish Council meeting**, Markbeech VH, planning 7pm full council 7.30pm	
9 May **Hever Hort Plant Sale**, Hever Village Hall	10am
10 May **Early Summer Foraging Walk**, Bore Place, adults £37	2-4.30pm
14 May **Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
16 May **A Buzz about Bees Workshop**, The Barn Falconhurst adults £80	10-3.30pm
16 May **Ben Campbell-Johnson Memorial Rugby Match,** Chiddingstone Sports Ground	2pm
18 May **Annual Parish Assembly**, Four Elms Village Hall	7pm
17 May **Introduction to Beekeeping**, Bore Place adult £80	10- 4pm
20 May **World Bee Day**	
30 May **EMAT Concert**, London Flute Quintet, Edenbridge Parish Church	7pm
6 June **Hever Hort Rose Show**, Hever Village Hall	2-4pm
6 June **Music for a Summer Evening**, Holy Trinity Forest Row	7pm
7 June **Introduction to Kefir & Fermented Drinks**, Bore Place, Adult £40	10-1.30pm
8 June **Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms	from 10.45am
11 June **Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
13 June **Hever Village Hall Open Day**,	3-5.30pm
14 June **Chiddingstone Open Garden Tour**	
20 June **Hever School Fete**, Parish Field, Hever	11:30-3:30pm
27–28 June **Chiddingstone Big Weekend**	
11 July **Four Elms Fete**	
23 July **Bore Place Spotter Trail**, children £5 accompanying adults free	10.30-1.30pm
13 Aug **Family Pasta workshop**, Bore Place, adult+child £55, extra child £10	10-12.30pm

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