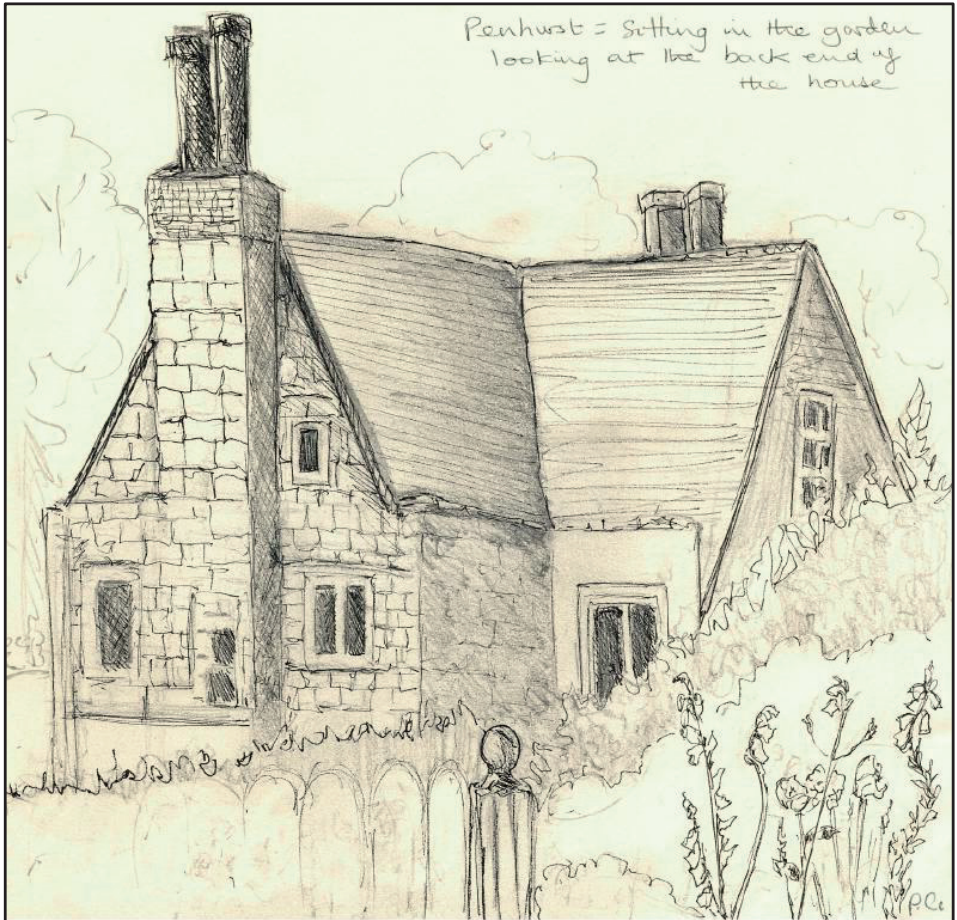


ASH WITH WESTMARSH
PARISH MAGAZINE
JULY 2026
£1



The Canonry Benefice of
Ash – Chillenden – Elmstone – Goodnestone
Nonington – Preston – Stourmouth

Useful Contacts

Service	Organisation/Name	Contact
<u>Emergencies</u> 999	Gas Emergency (24hrs)	0800 111 999
	UK Power Networks (24hrs)	105
	Water Leak Line (24hrs)	0800 820 999
<u>Community</u>	Non-urgent and other enquiries	101
	Ash Neighbourhood Watch	
	Josh Coombs	07546 212154
	Crime Stoppers	0800 555111
	Community Safety Dover	01304 872220
	Childline	0800 1111
	Kent County Council	08458 247247
	Dover District Council	01304 821199
	District Councillors:	
	Cllr Trevor Bartlett	07980 300084
	cllr-trevor.bartlett@dover.gov.uk	
	Cllr Martin Porter	07733 111334
	cllr-martin.porter@dover.gov.uk	
	Sir Roger Gale MP	01843 848588
	suzy@galemail.com	
	Ash Parish Council	07398 584 053
	clerk@ashparishcouncil.gov.uk	
	Citizens Advice (Dover area)	0844 8487978
	Ash Village Hall Enquiries	07947 832807
	Environmental Health	01304 872215
	Trading Standards	0845 4040506
	Ash Library	01304 812440
<u>Healthcare</u>	NHS Medical Helpline (24hrs)	111
	Out of Hours Doctor Service	0844 8001234
	Ash Surgery	01304 812227
	Hospitals - Kent and Canterbury	01227 766877
	QEQM Margate	01843 225544
	William Harvey	01233 633331
	Pharmacy - Ash (Boots)	01304 812242
<u>Education</u>	Cartwright and Kelsey School	01304 812539
	St Faith's Prep School	01304 813409
	Sandwich Technology College	01304 610000
	Sir Roger Manwood School	01304 613286

Times can be tough. There's always someone you can talk to 24/7.

The Samaritans: call 116 123 or visit [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)

~ If an error is noted please inform the editors ~

Welcome to the July Magazine

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Magazine Subscription

Never miss an edition of your favourite parish magazine! To arrange a subscription including magazine delivery to your door (within the parish) phone Rebecca on 07443 605873 or email rebeccasmith.ash@gmail.com

Front cover

Penhurst on a Retreat. By Pat Coles. See Cover Story page 35.

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Share Your News

Email copy for the next magazine edition by **Thursday 19th July** to rebeccasmith.ash@gmail.com or post hard copy at 69, The Street, Ash.

Advertise in the Parish Magazine

Reasonable rates and a loyal readership

Send advertising enquiries to ashpm.ads@gmail.com

Publisher's note:

This magazine is produced by St. Nicholas Parish Church. We welcome items from individuals and local organisations. All items should come with a note of the contributor's name. The editor reserves the right both to edit and not to publish anything she receives. Items on church matters do not represent the official position of the Church of England.

What's On

HAPPY HOUR at Elmstone Church (or Church Meadow if the weather is fine) Friday 3rd July from 6.30pm. For more Elmstone news, see page 32.

ADULT BALLROOM CLASSES start on Friday 3rd July at Ash Village Hall. See page 15 for details.

THE COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING at Ash Village Hall hosted by Ash Horticultural Society is on Saturday 4th July. See poster page 16.

THE GOOD COMPANIONS meet at Ash Village Hall on Tuesdays 7th and 21st July. 2-4pm. Games, conversation and companionship.

THE FRIENDS OF STOURMOUTH CHURCH present A Stroll Along the Nailbourne Valley, an illustrated talk by Peter Ewart on Wednesday 8th July. See page 8 for details.

ASH WI meet on July 9th to hear Jan Napier speak on Crumbs and Crumble. Meet Ash Village Hall. 1.30pm.

THE CHURCHYARD BASH. Saturday 11th July. 9am-noon at St Nicholas Church, Ash. Join volunteers to maintain the church grounds.

ASH CARNIVAL ASSOCIATION is holding the Ash Summer Fayre on Saturday 11th July at Ash Recreation Ground. See pages 13 and 14.

ASH BOWLING CLUB hosts a BBQ on Saturday 11th July from 6.30pm. All welcome. See page 20 for details.

AGE CONCERN SANDWICH Summer Fair takes place on Thursday 16th July 10am – 1pm. See poster page 33.

ASH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY meet on Thursday 23rd July at Ash Village Hall from 7.30pm for a Gardeners' Question with panel Lou Dowle, Gary Bradbury and Steve Edney. See page 29 for details.

If you're holding an event, let us know. Email rebeccasmith.ash@gmail.com

Regulars

Ash Pain Management Support Group – For anyone who suffers from long-term pain. Second Wednesday 11am-1pm at Ash Scout Hall, Molland Lea. £2 entry includes refreshments and a raffle. Contact Maureen on 07922 096932 or email maureenloveash@gmail.com with any queries.

St Nicholas Church Warm Space – Thursday 11am-1pm. There is free tea/coffee and a mug of hot homemade soup with a roll.

Ash Bowling Club Weekly Free Community Coffee Morning – from 10am-12pm every Monday at the club in Moat Lane. All residents of Ash are welcome. Free tea/coffee and biscuits.

Age Concern Sandwich Meet, Eat, Heat – two course lunch for £4.50. Mondays and Fridays.

Ash Library opening times

Monday 11:30am - 5pm (closed 1pm - 2pm)

Tuesday 9:30am - 1pm

Wednesday 9:30am - 2pm

Thursday: Closed

Friday 11:30am - 5pm

Saturday 9am - 2pm

Sunday: Closed

Bank holidays: Closed

Ash Toddler Group – meet on Mondays in Ash Village Hall from 10am-11.30am in term times.

Ash Heritage Centre – opens Saturday mornings 10am-12noon and is home to a wide range of local historical items and records. (Not August.) www.ashheritagegroup.org.uk

Walk and Talk – slow-paced walking group meeting on Fridays at Ash GP surgery. 11.30am

Guides, Brownies and Rangers

1st Ash Brownies 7-10 yrs: 1stashnextsandwichbrownies@gmail.com

1st Ash Guides 10 - 14 yrs: 1stashnxtswichguides@outlook.com

1st Ash Rangers 14 - 18 yrs: 1stashrangers@gmail.com

Church Services for July

Sunday 5th July

Holy Communion 10.30am St. Nicholas, Ash

Whole Benefice Service to celebrate the Ordination of Reverend Anne Talbert

Sunday 12th July

Holy Communion 9am All Saints, Chillenden

Holy Communion 10.30am St. Nicholas, Ash

Family Worship 10.30am St Mildred's, Preston

Breakfast Church 9.30am St. Mary's Nonington

Sunday 19th July

Holy Communion 9am Holy Cross, Goodnestone

Holy Communion 9am St Nicholas, Ash

Service of the word 10.30am Elmstone Church

Holy Communion 10.30am St. Nicholas, Ash

Sunday 26th July

Holy Communion 9am All Saints, Chillenden

Holy Communion 10.30am St. Nicholas, Ash

Evensong 6.30pm Stourmouth

Pet Service, All Saint's Chillenden, Sunday 26th July 3pm.

Private Prayer

Churches are open at the following times:

St Nicholas, Ash

All week 9.30am to 3pm

Holy Cross, Goodnestone

All week in daylight hours

St Mary's Nonington

All week in daylight hours

All Saints, Chillenden

Weekends 10am-5pm

All Saints, Stourmouth

All week in daylight hours

Other churches
can be unlocked
on request.
Please note
services may be
taking place
during this time.

Parish Register

Baptism

Henry Rudgard-Redsell, 14th June, St Mildred's Preston

Weddings

Clare Delf and John Garcia-Rodriguez, 6th June, St Mary's, Nonington

Francesca Mochrie and William Beeching, 13th June, All Saints,
Chillenden

Molly Terheege and Jack Donkin, 20th June, Holy Cross, Goodnestone

Amy Shaw and Barry Forward, 27th June, St Mildred's, Preston

Maddie Chivers and Bradley Scorer, 27th June, Holy Cross, Goodnestone

Funeral

Janet Susan Dale, July 3rd, 1pm. Barham Crematorium

Parish Letter

A Season of Sunshine

As the long-awaited summer months arrive, our local neighbourhood comes alive with the joyful sounds of children playing, garden barbecues, and community gatherings. Summer is a beautiful time to enjoy God's creation and connect with one another, but it is also a season that calls for us to look out for each other. As I write we hear of 17 young lives lost whilst seeking the cool of open water. As we think and pray for all the families involved, we must remember as the saying goes, "safety is everyone's responsibility." Caring for one another can extend beyond our thoughts and prayers; it is a practical way to love our neighbours as ourselves. How can we let our community enjoy the warmer weather while keeping everyone safe?

Whether heading to the coast near Sandwich or enjoying our local rivers and parks, water can pose hidden dangers. Let's remind each other to always swim between designated lifeguard flags at the beach and to be aware of the dangers of cold-water shock, which can affect even the strongest swimmers. Never swim alone or without someone still on dry land to seek help if it's needed. Make sure your loved ones know where you are, maybe join an open water swimming group.

Hot weather can be challenging for the elderly, the very young, and those with underlying health conditions.

Maybe we can check on elderly neighbours or those living alone. A quick knock on the door to ensure they have enough fluids, a cool space, and are keeping out of the midday sun can make a lifesaving difference.

Whilst we cherish the sunshine in the UK, extreme heat can cause dehydration and heat exhaustion. Can we encourage families to stay hydrated, wear sunscreen, and seek shade during the hottest part of the day (typically between 11am and 3pm).

Dry summer spells increase the risk of accidental fires. If you are hosting a picnic or a family barbecue, never leave a lit barbecue or bonfire unattended. Ensure that disposable barbecues are completely cooled before putting them in the bin to prevent accidental fires.

As our church strives to be the heart of our community, and by re-sharing this wisdom, we hope to help foster a culture of care. Let's make this summer not just a season of fun, but a season of community vigilance and genuine love. Let us enjoy the sunshine, (keep an umbrella to hand), look out for one another, and have a safe, blessed summer!

Nick Hassall

The Friends of
Stourmouth Church

A STROLL ALONG THE NAILBOURNE VALLEY

AN ILLUSTRATED TALK BY PETER EWART

WEDNESDAY 8TH JULY

7.30PM

ALL SAINTS CHURCH,
STOURMOUTH

CT3 1HT



Tickets on the door £5.00
includes wine & nibbles



THE CHURCHES CONSERVATION TRUST

Speed Limit Consultation

Kent County Council is consulting on proposals to introduce a 20mph speed limit on a number of roads in Ash following a request from Ash Parish Council.

The proposed 20mph limit would apply to roads including Gilton to Collar Makers, Chequer Lane, Queens Road, Molland Lane and surrounding roads, and New Street. Sandwich Road has not been included because average vehicle speeds are considered too high. If approved, the scheme would be implemented mainly through new signs and road markings, with enforcement remaining a police responsibility.

The scheme, if implemented, is expected to cost around £17,000, which would be funded by Ash Parish Council.

The consultation closes at noon on 6th July. Further details on how to have your say are available in *The Onlooker*.

Ash Level Solar Farm Planning Appeal

The hearing of an appeal against the decision to refuse permission for a solar farm at Ash Level is scheduled to open on Tuesday 15th September. The inquiry will be held at Dover District Council Offices in Whitfield.

The proceedings may be livestreamed, so that members of the public can follow remotely if they are unable to attend in person.

The main issues are expected to be:

- the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the local landscape
- the effect on the setting and significance of designated heritage assets, particularly the Church of St Nicholas in Ash and Richborough Roman Castle and Scheduled Ancient Monument, including the amphitheatre
- the effect on archaeological remains
- whether the claimed benefits of the proposal are sufficient to outweigh any harmful impacts

Other matters may also be considered, including construction traffic, biodiversity, local living conditions, agricultural land, food production and any other relevant planning matters.

The Inspector will also carry out an unaccompanied visit to the site and surrounding area before the inquiry opens. That visit will also include Richborough Roman Castle and Scheduled Ancient Monument, including the amphitheatre.

Petition for Ash Bypass (A257) Road Safety Measures

Following years of campaigning for safety improvements on the A257, the A257 Traffic Group (of which Ash Parish Council is a member) are calling on KCC to act and improve safety along the A257, including the Ash Bypass.

The A257 Group is proposing:

50mph speed limit on the Ash bypass

40mph speed limit in the hamlet of Shatterling

central double white lines on the Roman Road

and enforcement of the speed limits

to improve safety for everyone living, working, walking, cycling, riding and driving on this road.

The petition is supported by Ash Parish Councillors, Sir Roger Gale MP and Kent Police Neighbourhood Beat Officer PC Jon Bowler.

Please sign our e-petition



The A257 Traffic Group is calling on KCC to make safety improvements on the A257 Roman Road.

Too many fatal and serious collisions have occurred on this road.

Go to: democracy.kent.gov.uk and search for ePetition details A257 Road Safety Measures. Or scan the QR code below



clerk@wingham-pc.gov.uk

The Parish Magazine welcomes articles and information from groups and individuals. Share your stories, news and views.

Email rebeccasmith.ash@gmail.com or post hard copy at 69 The Street, Ash.

Onlooker

A report of the Ash Parish Council meeting held on June 4th.

June is a key month for Parish Council finance and governance, and councillors worked through several important annual requirements.

Finance & Governance

The Council received and approved the Internal Audit Report, which confirmed no issues. Councillors also reviewed and approved:

- The Internal Controls Statement
- The Annual Governance Statement
- The Accounting Statements

The Exercise of Public Rights will run from Wednesday 17th June to Tuesday 28th July. During this period, any interested person may inspect the Council's accounts and related documents. To arrange access, please contact finance@ashparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Additional updates:

- A VAT refund of £6,450.34 has been received for the last financial year.
- Earmarked Reserves were noted as at year-end.
- The 2026/27 budget was agreed.

New Parish Councillors

The Council noted the resignation of Ashley Stevenson and thanked him for his valued contribution, particularly his work on Play Area 2.

We are pleased to welcome Terance Dickson and James Donaldson, who have been co-opted onto the Council.

There are currently 3 vacancies. If you would like to help shape the future of Ash, please contact clerk@ashparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Recreation Ground & Village Updates

- **Play Area 2** – Work is now underway on the new play area, with completion expected in July. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates.
- **Ash Carnival Committee Summer Fayre** – The Council is pleased to support the event planned for 11th July at the Recreation Ground.
- **Ash Guides & Rangers** have planted a commemorative tree in the Recreation Ground to mark 105 years of Guiding in Ash.
- **Public Toilets** – Unfortunately these have been vandalised twice in recent weeks. Opening hours will be reduced to 8am to 5pm daily minimise opportunities for further damage.
- **Recreation Ground & Allotment Inspections** – Were scheduled for 24th June.

20mph Speed Limit Consultation

Kent County Council is consulting on the introduction of 20mph limits on various roads in Ash. The consultation is due to end on July 6th at noon

Residents are encouraged to share their views via the KCC website at Let's Talk Kent (search Various roads, Ash in the District of Dover)

Dover District Council Updates

- **Walmer Paddling Pool** is now open for the summer.
- **Free After-School Sports Sessions** for ages 5–18 take place in Pencester Gardens, Dover, 3.30–5.30pm.
- **Community Governance Review** – Draft recommendations are out; consultation closes Friday 7th August at 5pm.
- The Parish Council has asked DDC to tidy The Street car park and urgently address the dilapidated garages near James Close.

Kent County Council Updates

- A new Kent Water Resilience Partnership is being established to address water supply and sewerage issues.
- A Fly-Tipping Conference will take place in July, bringing together councils, enforcement bodies and landowners. Kent sees 2,500 tonnes of fly-tipped waste each year, costing £345,000 to clear.





SUMMER FAYRE

SATURDAY 11TH JULY 2026

12pm-4pm

FACE PAINTING
GRAND RAFFLE
PERFORMANCES

ICE CREAM
TOMBOLA
LIVE BAND

Ash Recreation Ground, Ash, CT3 2BG

**Parking for this event will be at
St Faith's School, Ash, CT3 2HH**

FREE ENTRY



Ash Summer Fayre Returns in July

The Ash Carnival Association has announced that its Summer Fayre will take place on Saturday 11th July from noon to 4pm at the Recreation Ground in Ash.

The community event will feature live music from local band Vinyl Cover, performances and demonstrations by local groups, a raffle, tombola and a variety of family attractions. The day will also include the crowning of the Ash Little Prince and Ash Little Princess for 2026.

Visitors are encouraged to use the designated event parking at St Faith's School. As a thank you for helping to reduce congestion in the village, every driver parking at the school will receive a wristband giving them entry into a prize draw to win £30. Disabled parking will also be available.

The organisers are currently inviting applications from local stallholders, including craftspeople, food and drink producers, plant sellers, community groups, charities and local clubs. Anyone interested in taking part can find further information and register their interest via the Ash Carnival Association's Facebook page.

Guides Tree Planting

Ash Guides have planted a commemorative tree at Ash Recreation Ground to mark 105 years of Guiding in Ash.

The Guides helped Ash Parish Council Chair, Cllr John Tanner and



Duncan, the Parish Council's Caretaker, to dig the hole and plant a lime tree to add to the line of trees between the allotments and tennis courts.

A plaque will be added in the near future by Ash Brownies.

The planting of the tree demonstrates "Community Action" for Ash Brownies, Guides & Rangers which is a key part of their Promise and Guide laws.

New Ballroom Dance Classes

Fans of Strictly Come Dancing now have the chance to take to the dance floor themselves as new adult ballroom dancing classes are set to begin at Ash Village Hall.

Led by Lisa's Ballroom Dancing School, the beginner-friendly sessions are designed for anyone looking for a fun and sociable way to keep active, learn new skills and meet new people. No previous dance experience is required, and participants do not need to bring a partner.

Classes will cover popular ballroom and Latin dances, including the Waltz, Tango, Quickstep and Foxtrot, giving aspiring dancers the opportunity to master some of the moves made famous on television's glittering dance floor.

The classes start on Friday 3rd July and will run every Friday from 10.45am to 11.45am at Ash Village Hall. The cost is £8 per session.

For further information or to book a place, contact Lisa on 07765 910592 or email Lisa.Ballroom@gmail.com

Summer Reading

Elmstone resident Tessa Woodward, author of *In the Middle of Somewhere* (featured in this magazine in October 2023), has released a new collection of short stories this summer titled *Small Crimes*.

The book contains sixteen stories that range from humorous to more serious themes and is available via Amazon in e-book, paperback and hardback formats. More information about the author and her work can be found at www.tessawriting.co.uk

Tessa has lived in Kent for around 40 years, following an international career teaching English and training teachers in countries including Japan, Switzerland and the USA. She later worked as an editor and writer of non-fiction before turning to fiction and short stories, eventually publishing her first novel about village life.

Copies may also be obtained directly from the author when she is out walking locally!

ASH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Ash Community Coffee Morning



Saturday 4th July



Ash Village Hall



10:00am – 12:00 noon

*The weekend
begins here!*

And of course...

PLANTS FOR SALE

GOOD COMPANY • GREAT COFFEE • HOMEMADE TREATS • BEAUTIFUL PLANTS • ALL WELCOME!



Ash Cricket Club

There is still plenty of cricket to enjoy at the Recreation Ground this season, with Ash Cricket Club welcoming spectators to home fixtures over the coming weeks. Whether you're a lifelong cricket fan or simply looking for a pleasant afternoon outdoors, why not come along and support your local team? The bar will be open from 4pm, making it a great opportunity to enjoy some village sport and socialise with friends and neighbours.

Remaining Home Fixtures

- Saturday 4th July, 1.00pm – Ash 1st XI vs St Lawrence & Highland Court
- Sunday 5th July, 2pm (approx.) – Army vs Navy
- Tuesday 7th July, 5.30pm – Ash 1st XI vs The Haywain (T20)
- Sunday 12th July, 1.30pm – Ash Exiles vs Wye
- Saturday 18th July, 1pm – Ash 1st XI vs Willesborough
- Saturday 25th July, 1pm – Ash 1st XI vs Betteshanger
- Saturday 8th August, 1pm – Ash 1st XI vs Wye
- Sunday 16th August, 1.30pm – Ash Exiles vs Challock
- Saturday 29th August, 12.30pm – Ash 1st XI vs Worth

Everyone is welcome, and the club looks forward to seeing plenty of local support for the remainder of the season.

Michael Smalley

Ash Wildlife Friendly Village

Rare Turtle Dove Sighting on the Ash Level

Members joined the community coffee morning in June to celebrate exciting news that a pair of Turtle Doves had been recorded at Cooper Street Drove on the Ash Levels.

Resident Graham Doyle spotted the nationally rare birds in May near the entrance to the proposed solar farm site. The sighting was subsequently confirmed by Jenny Walker, Head of Operation Turtle Dove at the RSPB, who visited the site and provided specialist seed and a wildlife camera to support ongoing monitoring.

The Turtle Dove is one of Britain's most threatened bird species, having declined by around 99% since the 1960s. Evidence gathered from local

observations is being submitted by the RSPB to Natural England as part of its response to the proposed solar farm development.

Ash Citizen Science Month

Ash Citizen Science Month returns this August, inviting residents to record wildlife in gardens, parks, footpaths, fields and hedgerows.

Last year's survey revealed a remarkable variety of local wildlife, including wrens, chiffchaffs, green woodpeckers, bats, hedgehogs, butterflies and moths. Notable records included a Jersey Tiger Moth, believed to be a first for Ash, together with sightings of a hoglet and several striking moth caterpillar species.

Jack Foat Land, Molland Lane Footpath, Moat Lane and St Nicholas Churchyard emerged as important biodiversity hotspots, reinforcing the value of hedgerows and other green spaces for wildlife.

Join this year's recording by either sending your sightings to AshWildlifeVillage@gmail.com or directly to our Facebook page. You can request a recording sheet by emailing us or messaging via Facebook.

Community Action

The group's June litter pick attracted nine volunteers, including young Poppy and Larry and their parents, who collected two bags of litter. In total, nine bags were removed from local streets, footpaths and verges.

Encouragingly, significantly less litter was found than during the previous litter pick in March, reflecting the positive impact of ongoing community efforts.

The same evening, members carried out a Swift survey and counted around 16 birds feeding over the village at dusk. An active Swift nest was also located, highlighting the importance of Ash as a summer home for these remarkable migratory birds.

Every wildlife sighting recorded, habitat improved and community action undertaken helps build a stronger picture of local biodiversity and supports the protection of species and habitats under increasing pressure.



Ash Cartwright and Kelsey School

It is hard to believe that we are nearing the end of another very successful academic year. It has been a very busy term for our children.

Community is our value for this term and this has been evident in and around the school. Year 6 ventured out in the minibus and enjoyed a biodiversity day at Langton Girls' School in Canterbury in their wonderful orchard area, (often referred to as the East Kent Environment Centre). The children saw a huge variety of insects and butterflies and took part in tree and pond sampling. This day was funded by a grant provided by the Royal Society. The children worked with amazing biodiversity academics from Cambridge University, along with local STEM professionals. What a great opportunity.



We celebrated diversity week in school to promote the British Values of tolerance and mutual respect. Classes learnt about different beliefs such as:

- EYFS - Paganism
- Year 1 – Buddhism
- Year 2 – Shinto
- Year 3 – Indigenous Australians
- Year 4 – Taoism
- Year 5 – Bahai
- Year 6 – Yazidism

The children celebrated all their learning by earning their Global Passport at a shared learning session in the school hall.

We ended the school year as a community by celebrating Sports Week in school – this ended with a very exciting sports day! We wish all our year 6 children all the very best as they move onto secondary school and we will miss them very much.

Please ring the school to book a tour if you have a child wishing to start school in September in our nursery. (01304 812539).

Fiona Crascall, Headteacher



ASH BOWLING CLUB

INVITES YOU TO OUR

BBQ



SATURDAY 11TH JULY
6.30PM |

(following our home game)



BAR



PRICE

£6 FOR MEMBERS

£8 FOR NON-MEMBERS



**PUT YOUR NAME
DOWN AT
THE CLUB**



**OR CONTACT
ROY BY EMAIL**

secretary.ashbowlsclub@gmail.com



**DON'T
MISS OUT!**



ASH BOWLING CLUB

**MOAT LANE, ASH
CT3 2DG.**

Ash Heritage Group

Guided walk along the 'Saxon Shoreline'

On a warm and sunny mid-June morning, a group of twenty or so AHG members convened at Brookestreet Farmhouse for a guided walk around part of the old shoreline, the edge of land that used to border the Wantsum Channel some two millennia ago. The walk was curated by Committee member Graham Doyle, and this is very much his home territory: he lives here.

What might have been merely a pleasant stroll in bucolic surroundings, with wheat fields and sheep in their pastures and buzzards overhead, was turned by Graham into a revelation, where otherwise unprepossessing features of the landscape took on extra significance. (If you have OS map 150, you can easily follow the route: Brookestreet Farm - Cooper Street - Fleet Farm - Richborough Road - Guston Farm - Lower Goldstone - Sparrow Castle - Cooper Street - Brookestreet Farm.)

From Brooke Street farm track there was an early opportunity for Graham to point out the past outline of the Wantsum Channel and the influence of long-shore drift at Stonar, which finally closed it off and led to the alluvial plain we see today. This became clearer as we crossed nearby Goshall Stream. We then walked along a section of Cooper Street Drove, which follows the alignment of the Roman road from Richborough, and from which we could see how the road ran from there towards Dubris (Dover). At Cooper Street itself there is a set of attractive 18th century houses which track the old shoreline road.

At Mullbrey House (sic) there was a pause for refreshment (thanks to Veronica O'Brien) and, from close to Fleet Farm nearby, to observe the track of this, the extreme southern end of Watling Street as it approaches Richborough. On to the junction with Richborough Road, where the land rises at the point where the Kent mainland was separated from what was formerly the island of Richborough by a narrow stretch of the Wantsum Channel. 'Rises' is a decidedly relative term: the mainland side is all of 5 metres above sea level, while Richborough itself rises to 17 metres.

Then to Guston Farm and a view towards Minster across alluvial land close to sea level, which is drained by the man-made Richborough Stream towards Pluck's Gutter, where it is pumped into the Stour. Ian Chandler was on hand to explain the land use around here, and the

drainage system for this very low-lying area. There was a clear view to Manston Airfield, and Graham pointed out the location of the dummy airfield near to it, constructed with the aim of deceiving enemy aircraft into dropping their bombs on to open land, rather than Manston itself. Apparently, it also deceived at least one RAF pilot into landing in the wrong place.

Our next stop was Lower Goldstone and the newly opened Calf and a Half pub for lunch - and a rather special event, which surprised one of our party. This was the occasion of a farewell presentation to one of AHG's more recent members, Edith Featherstone, who is moving away from Ash. Edith has been a most valued member of the team, and it was delightful for the group to be able to express their thanks to her on this occasion, and to wish her well for the future.

Now began the home leg towards Brookestreet Farmhouse, past Sparrow Castle and Sandhills Farm, an 'elevated' position (a dizzy 6 meters above sea level) which afforded further views towards Woodnesborough, Ash Church and, looking in the other direction, Minster. Then back towards Brookestreet, pausing at the site of Brooke House, the former seat of the once prominent Godfrey family, about whom Peter Ewart gave a talk last November. Sadly, there is now scarcely a trace left of this originally Tudor



manor house: it was demolished in 1953, having been rather ill used in the Second World War, and following the decline of the Godfreys. One of these uses was as a PoW camp, and Mike Humphrey

related how, in the late 1980s, a former prisoner had brought his family to see a place for which he retained fond memories (it would certainly have been preferable to Stalingrad or Normandy) - only to find it gone.

We finally managed to tear ourselves away from our second gathering at Brookestreet, and a highly pleasurable and informative experience, a good five hours after starting out. The OS map will look different from now on.

Ken Manktelow



To find out our latest news and be the first to hear about our Open Share Offer follow us on social media



The-Chequer-Inn-Ash-Society



chequerinnashsociety

www.chequerinnashsociety.co.uk

9th Ash Scout Group

We were deeply saddened by the passing of Victor Marsh earlier this year. Victor had been involved in scouting in Ash since as a boy and continued to serve for many years as an adult leader. In recognition of his long and dedicated service, we have dedicated our recent rewilding project to his memory.



We would like to thank everyone who kindly donated at the church and the village hall. The generosity of the community has been extraordinary and is especially appreciated in a year when our overheads have nearly doubled. Victor would have been very proud. His constant presence and laughter are greatly missed. The children designed and planned a scheme to make better use of the area behind the Hut and to encourage more wildlife to visit. All of this work has contributed towards the prestigious Earth Tribe badge.

New habitats have been created from recycled materials for birds, hedgehogs, insects and reptiles, alongside a new pond for amphibians and other pond life. We believe Victor would have been proud of their creations, the thought behind them and the skill involved in making them.



The Cubs and Scouts began the project with a bioblitz, an initial survey of the wildlife already present. We are excited to repeat the exercise to see whether their efforts have increased both the number and diversity of species visiting the site.

We would like to thank our partners at Ash Wildlife Friendly Village for their inspiration, financial support and kind donation of nest boxes. We would also like to thank our friends at Monkton Nature Reserve for donating bird nest boxes, which the children installed before the nesting

season. A further thank you goes to Ash Horticultural Society for their advice and for supplying seeds and sunflower plants for the Beavers to grow.

Knowing about our financial challenges, our partners at East Kent Growers organised a quiz in aid of the group, as did the wonderful team at The Chequer Inn. We are very grateful for their support and kindness.

The support we have received from the community we serve has been incredible and enables us to continue providing fantastic scouting experiences for the 66 children in our Group. Our aim is to build confidence, acquire life skills, develop resilience and robustness above all, make sure everyone has fun.

Here are just some of the things we have been up to.

Most recently, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorer Young Leaders, parents and Leaders embarked on an impressive 22-mile bike ride from Pegwell Bay to Walmer Castle and back in aid of WaterAid.

The whole Group took part in the second annual Scout Grand Prix, where pedal go-karts and scooters raced around our makeshift track, supported by our very own pit crew and marshals.

As part of our Invasion Coast theme and in preparation for the Duke of



Edinburgh's Award, the Scouts undertook an expedition to explore the history on our doorstep, including landmarks linked to the Viking invasion, the Saxon landing at Ebbsfleet, the Tudor castles, and First and Second World War features along the coast.

This term, Young Leaders and senior Scouts have been teaching others bushcraft and survival skills, including tree climbing, shelter building, and lighting and cooking on campfires.

Other badge-related activities have included learning how to use a trail camera, basic bike maintenance, and vehicle maintenance with one of our Scout dads, a real-life rally driver, who brought along his car. Albie, one of our Scouts, also brought in his trials motorbike.

The Scouts developed their marksmanship skills through archery and air rifle shooting, where Ted hit the bullseye, while the Cubs earned their gardening badge at East Kent Growers.

We also held a kayaking day at Grove Ferry, where Scouts learned capsize drills and Cubs were introduced to paddling.

The Beavers visited Sandwich Fire Station, had a turn using a hose, tried on the kit, and learned about home fire safety.



Thanks to our friends at Ash Chronic Pain Management Group, we were able to purchase fencing equipment, and our own Scout, Jasper, taught the Beavers the rudiments of this noble sport.

9th Ash Scout Group meets on a Thursday evening.

- Beavers 6-7pm
- Cubs and Scouts 7.15-8.45pm

Our Hut is available for hire and is ideal for local clubs, societies and birthday parties.

Is your child thinking about joining?

- Beavers 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ to 8 years old
- Cubs 8 to 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ years old
- Scouts 10 to 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ years old
- Young Leaders 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 18 years old

Want to join in the fun? We are looking for adult leaders. Contact Us:
Email: contact9thash@yahoo.com

Craig Nimmo, AKA Bagheera,

Ash Girlguiding

1stashrangers@gmail.com

Ash Guides & Rangers camped at Paxwood Girlguiding campsite at the end of May on one of the hottest weekends of the year. Our canvas tents proved their worth as we looped up the sides and kept cool. The girls were busy lighting fires, cooking their meals, having several water fights and exploring the site. It has a lot of woodland, a great zipwire, adventure play area and a beautiful pond for pond dipping. We found dragonfly larvae, newts, minnows and other pond life. Some of the girls' highlights were campfire, night games and sleeping out in hammocks, experiences you don't forget.

In Guiding tradition, Ash Brownies, Guides & Rangers have donated a tree and together with Ash Parish Council planted it on the Ash recreation ground to commemorate Ash Girlguiding's 105th birthday, which we celebrated last year. We would like to thank Duncan, Ash village caretaker for digging the hole and we hope the tree will thrive and grow for everyone to enjoy.

Rangers have chosen to work on their first aid skills this term and are also using their imaginations to create their own wide game for the Guides to enjoy. The Guides are focusing on bushcraft skills and plan to practise their map reading around the village.

We have welcomed in several new girls to our Guide unit in the last few weeks and we are getting excited as we move closer to the Ash Rainbows unit re-opening in September. We have several new volunteers joining the Rainbow & Brownie units to support them which is fantastic for the units and the girls. Ash Rainbows will run alongside the Ash Brownie unit on Thursday evenings, 5.15 pm – 6.45pm at Ash Village Hall. If you know any girls who would like to join the Ash Rainbows please contact: Firstashrainbows@gmail.com.

If you are interested in supporting Ash Guiding or have girls who would like to join any of our units, Rainbows 4 – 7yrs, Brownies 7-10yrs, Guides 10 – 14yrs or Rangers 14 – 18yrs, please contact us, we would love to hear from you?

Have a look at our picture gallery on our Instagram to see have been doing in Ash GirlGuiding.

We are proud of our UK national Guiding statistics that girls in Guiding are 30% more confident and 15% happier than the UK average girl. So come along and join in.

Madelaine Lambie
1st Ash Rangers, Instagram: 1stashrangers

Ash Bowling Club

The community coffee morning on 2nd May was a great fundraising morning for the club. Thank you to all our friends who came along to support the event. We raised over £700!

The annual Ash Village Societies event took place on 24th May with 8 teams from the village taking part. The Knit and Natter team won for the second year running. Thanks to everyone who came along to have some fun in the sun! A huge well done to Lorna, Janice and Sheila who won the event.



Our annual Doreen Underhill Open Competition took place on 6th June. 22 teams from bowling clubs across Kent took part. Although the weather wasn't kind, everyone had a great day. Congratulations and thank you to all the competitors. Our Jack Fogg competition took place on 13th June and was as usual, a hotly contested event. For pictures and further info on all our competitions - visit our website - www.ashbowlsclub.org

The draw for the club competitions has now taken place. There are some cracking games to take place in all the early rounds - good luck to all those that have entered.

Coming up in July:

- Social bowls - every Friday from 6pm. Have a go at bowls and enjoy a drink and a chat with us.
- Club BBQ on 11th July.

We do hope to see residents from the village coming along and supporting us – it's always nice to see everyone down at the club house.

Don't forget, we have a weekly Free Community Catch Up from 10-12 every Monday at the club, and all residents of Ash are welcome. We offer free tea/coffee and biscuits. Please come along - it's completely free and will continue to run into the summer!

Throughout the year we will be hosting different social events which you will see advertised through our Facebook page, or alternatively you can visit our website: www.ashbowlsclub.org.uk or contact Roy for further information - secretary.ashbowlsclub@gmail.com

Roy Allen

League of Friends of Kent and Canterbury Hospital (Ash Branch)

On 6th June we hosted the Community Coffee Morning in the village hall when we raised over £400 for the hospital. Thank you to all who came along to support us and to those who gave their help and time in making the event a great success.

We are now focussing on the Ash Carnival Summer Fayre 12 -4pm on Saturday 11th July, Ash Recreation Ground, where we will be having our usual stalls.

We are also preparing for the League of Friends Summer Festival & Fair which will be held on Sunday 19th July in the hospital grounds 12 – 4pm. Entry is free and there will be free car parking. There will be plenty of live music & dancing; food & drink; entertainment for children; stalls and the Grand Prize Draw will take place. All proceeds will go to the Kent & Canterbury Hospital to support patients, staff and visitors. The Ash Group will be running two activities for children plus the bric-a-brac stall.

Raffle tickets are currently on sale at £1 each. Please contact me as below or purchase your tickets at our next Community Coffee Morning 10am-12noon in the village hall on Saturday 4th July when we look forward to seeing you.

Hazel Damiral
01304 772363

Ash Horticultural Society

Coming up

- Saturday 4th July Ash Village Hall 10am-12noon. The Hort Soc will be running the Community coffee morning and selling plants. See advert on p16.
- Saturday 11th July 2-5pm Garden Gossip in Village Centre Gardens
- Thursday 23rd July: Ash Village Hall 7.30pm. Gardeners' Question Time in Ash Village Hall with panel Lou Dowle, Gary Bradbury and Steve Edney. Ask questions on the night or if you are shy, send them to sunrise@landmine.me.uk There will also be the final weigh-in for the potatoes grown in pots. Don't water your pot after Saturday 18th and bring it along with your name clearly marked and the top (haulm) removed. Remember to bring a bag along to take home your potatoes.

Continued over

Sophie Leathart: Growing plants for cutting

After an earlier career, Sophie retrained as a horticulturalist and received accreditation in 2015, fortunately - in the present context - finding herself working for a client who wanted a garden specifically for cut flowers. Sophie was also a freelance florist. She began with a brief excursion into the origins of the flowers we typically use. A lot of monasteries had walled gardens used for herbs and suchlike (Canterbury Cathedral still has one) and people would gather flowers from hedgerows, going on to cultivate the flowers we see around us today. Medieval pictures show examples of recognisable flowers being used.



Powered transport, initially railways, and the use of coal changed everything. For the first time, it was possible to range beyond the home area, and for distant produce to be brought in over much longer distances while still fresh. As a child, Sophie knew a woman, and former 'land girl' in the Second World War, who herself remembered picking bunches of primroses and putting them on the train to London for sale. Violets were also sold and bought in this way but are now quite rare. In 1949, the value of the market for flowers was £49million and they were mostly grown in Britain; now, we spend over £1billion on flowers, the majority imported from abroad, e.g. from East Africa.

Large houses also had walled gardens, for growing food, but typically an area would be set aside for cut flowers and these could, like the primroses and violets, be sent to the owners' town houses. There also arose a fashion for flower arranging in Victorian times, parallel with the upsurge in plant hunting expeditions: the plant hunters brought home previously unknown species and varieties so that now, some 70% of the flowering plants grown in Britain originate abroad. Knowing a plant's origins can be helpful in determining its favoured growing conditions.

Cutting gardens are now increasing in popularity once again. Things you need to think about when setting one up include Position: in what direction does it face, how much is in shade or sun? Water supply, for times when there is a drought. What to grow: flowers that are not as easy

to find as the ones in the supermarket are best; and even those varieties might not be the right colour, for instance. Sophie gave as a specific example Lupins: you do not typically see these in shops or florists. Cut them when the first florets emerge, and watch out for the lupin aphid. They will repeat flower in September if cut before the seed pods set.

To create an arrangement, keep in mind the four Fs: Feature flowers, fillers, foliage and fragrance.

Feature flowers: this is a truncated list. With roses, cut them when they are one-third to a half open, in the early morning, while they are fully hydrated, put them straight in water and keep them in a cool, dark place for 24 hours. This will maximise their vase life. Peonies shed their petals very readily; a new plant should not be used for cutting for two or three years. When ready, cut when the buds are soft, and don't take too much foliage. Delphiniums, like lupins, should be cut when the first florets appear. Their hollow stems can be turned upside down and filled with water then put in the vase, and they should be kept away from ripening fruit, as the gas given off by it shortens their vase life! The best hydrangeas are those that appear on this year's growth and should be picked when fully out; seal the stems with hot water. Dahlias are available in huge varieties; doubles are best for cutting as they last longer than the single kind. Gladioli can be grown in succession: they go from planting to flowering in 90 days. Sunflowers: the smaller ones that grow out of side shoots are the best size. Amaranthus, or love-lies-bleeding, can be dried and used into the winter. Antirrhinums (snapdragons) should be treated like annuals if used as cut flowers: discard their plants once the flowers have been taken. Sweet peas grow well as cordons: take off all side shoots and run them along canes. They are particularly good for their scent, of course.

She went on to show us how the other two Fs, fillers and foliage, could be used to complement the arrangement. Wild carrot was one filler variety, and she also uses eryngiums, achilleas and honesty (for their seeds as well as their flowers). Herbs can be used to add fragrance. She rounded off her talk by reminding us to take a record of the seeds we use, their source and the results we get. But she was not yet done: following this grand tour of plant varieties, Sophie impressed us all by compiling a glorious arrangement using examples that she had brought along, all the while giving us yet more information, in a virtuoso display of multitasking.

Ken Manktelow

Friends of Elmstone and Preston Churches

St Mildred's

Thanks: Thank you to Gordon who has deep cleaned all the flooring in the Church - a mammoth task. We would also like to thank Richard Kemp for tidying the church path, and those keeping the weeds at bay, in time for our Teas and Stalls event and upcoming wedding.

Tea and Stalls: Following a Family Service in the morning on June 14th, which included a Baptism, taken by Anne Talbert and Barbara Way, the Church welcomed visitors to The Friends' Summer event in the afternoon. Although footfall was on the low side, those who came enjoyed a relaxing and very sociable afternoon, with teas outside in the glorious weather. We would like to thank Penny Cornet for organising the refreshments and flower arrangements, the cake makers and all the helpers with the various tasks before, during and after the event. We very much appreciated the support of the stall holders too. £235 has been made for The Friends.

Elmstone Church

Happy Hours: The next two dates are Friday 3rd July and Friday 7th August, from 6.30pm, on Church Meadow, weather permitting, otherwise in the church. Everyone is welcome.

Our Services for July

1st Sunday – Holy Communion 10.30am St. Nicholas, Ash
Whole Benefice Service to celebrate the Ordination of Reverend Anne Talbert
2nd Sunday – 12th July - Family Service, Preston, 10.30am (No Communion)
3rd Sunday – 19th July - Holy Communion, Elmstone, 10.30am

Refreshments are normally served after all our morning services.

Elizabeth Timms

The Arts Society Sandwich

Although we are taking a break from lectures for the summer we have some exciting events for members in July and August. A James Bond themed summer supper and an afternoon tea party.

Our TASS Artist Spotlight collection will continue to grow over the summer. Visit our Facebook page or website to see our talented members work. www.sandwichdfas.org.uk

We will be back in the Guildhall in September. See website for details.

Vicki Bates

SUMMER FAIR

10AM - 1PM



THURSDAY 16 JULY



MUSIC WITH HOLLIE FIRMIN

CAKE STALL

BRIC A BRAC

TOMBOLA

REFRESHMENTS

PIMMS

RAFFLE

EVERYONE WELCOME



Ash Variety Show Review

The village variety show provided an evening of laughter, music and entertainment, expertly held together by Philip and Sally Moore. Their entertaining interludes between acts drew plenty of laughs.

The show opened in stirring fashion with the multi-talented Mike Cobb on the bagpipes. Mike would reappear throughout the evening.

Despite temperatures in the village hall ranging from warm to volcanic, Jan's Tappers transported the audience to a rainy day with a routine to *Singing in the Rain*. Reverend Barbara Way offered an amusing yet thought-provoking rhyming summary of the past decade, touching on everything from Covid-19 to a succession of six Prime Ministers.

Representing the Isle of Thanet, the Ukulele Light Orchestra, joined by Jim Moran, entertained with a varied repertoire from Pink Floyd to *Blue Jeans*.

The first half concluded with *The Accident*, a sketch by the New Ash Players. Directed by Matt Titterton and featuring Jo Dilks, Tony Jones, Hazel Lander and Craig Potter, alongside guest appearances from Mike Cobb and Philip Moore as various pieces of furniture, the production cleverly explored the lengths performers will go to ensure that "the show must go on" ending in triumph as the troupe secured an encore courtesy of a cameo performance by vicar, Caroline Turvey.

Following refreshments, the Jaded Corvids brought energy to the second half. Featuring Lola on lead vocals, Jon Biggs and Julia Scarlett on guitar, Craig Potter on drums, and the evening's youngest performer, Ruby, on tambourine, the band impressed with rock favourites including *Seven Nation Army* and *Zombie*.

Further musical highlights came from Alec Sugden's trumpet rendition of *Summer Nights*, accompanied enthusiastically by the audience, and two elegant ballet performances by Mimi.

The evening concluded with a beautiful harp recital from Mike Cobb and two light-hearted sketches from the New Ash Players: *California Dreaming* and *Phobia Workshop*.

Congratulations to all the performers and organisers for a thoroughly enjoyable showcase of local talent. And a special thanks to Lucie for sterling work behind the scenes.

From the Stalls

Cover Story

Penhurst Retreat Centre

Recently, I went on a retreat at this beautiful Jacobean manor house not far from Battle. It was led by 2 lovely ladies from the church community in River. There was 12 of us participating, apart from me, all part of their congregation, though I knew some of them well and was welcomed to be one of the group. I'd not done one before so was a little apprehensive!

So why go? As the Penhurst booklet puts it: "we all need to step aside from daily life in order to see our lives, our relationship with God and others, from a fresh perspective." I feel that it is also at times when life just gets a bit much or we feel overwhelmed with 'stuff' and just need a break to put our lives and minds in order, relax in a quiet, safe space. Some folks go alone and spend most of the time in silent prayer and contemplation, that was not for me, but the calm caring atmosphere there, the kindness of the staff, good food and mostly quiet company was very refreshing.

There is a beautiful ancient church just across the lawn which was always open. But our group met in a modern chapel just a little to one side of the church: we often started with a prayer then a worship song before listening to one of our leaders give a short address with points for reflection and or discussion. We had a break then before the bell told us that dinner was served!

The afternoons were free: some lovely walks which a group of us did 3 of the afternoons, just talking, thinking and getting to know each other better. Then at 4 we met in the chapel for a second thoughtful talk with a simple form of evensong to finish with. Tea was at 5.30 we were then free to meet in the lounge, chat, play games, or walk again, enjoy the grounds, use art materials from a well-stocked art room, or spend a quiet evening in our rooms thinking or reading. I have to say there was usually wine and laughter in the lounge most evenings which was also fun!

When a church books a group retreat like this, they are the only people there, apart from a few staff. So, the atmosphere was respectful and relaxed. I was very impressed with it all, found the led times and worship helpful and enjoyable with much to reflect and think about. Just the beautiful grounds and woodlands, geese on the pond, all very enjoyable and relaxing, very good home cooked food, I will be saving up to go again with them next year!

I was also impressed with my spacious bedroom: comfortable bed, a desk and chair and 2 comfortable chairs; all in all very worthwhile. Do ask if you'd like to know more.

Pat Coles

Garden Jottings for July

How welcome was the long-awaited rain after weeks of hoping for even a little shower! It is truly amazing however that nature can cope with the vagaries of the climate.

At long last we can plant out late season annuals - Cosmos Rudbeckia and Zinnia etc. many perennials are beginning to flower – Phlox, Campanulas, tall white Daisies and Salvias, albeit very much shorter than normal and many self-sown annuals are popping up randomly along with sow thistles and bindweed thanks to the welcome rain.

Hopefully raspberries and runner beans will now be able to start production but don't forget to net soft fruit to deter the birds. Keep picking Sweet Peas which, like beans and peas, will stop flowering if left to form seed and mature pods.

Keep onions and beans well-watered every few days and weed by hand onions and carrots so the carrot and onion fly will not detect the smell and be attracted to infest the crop.

I am lucky to have plenty of space to grow on plants and seedlings but even a few modules pots and trays will yield a surprising amount of successful plants. Seeds of biennials sown last month for example Sweet Williams, Canterbury Bells, Stocks and Foxgloves will now be ready to plant outside after they have grown on in trays or modules. These seedlings can be planted where new potatoes have been harvested.

If you have grown or purchased lots of bedding plants such as Geraniums and Dianthus they need to be well watered not a little dribble but a nice soak every three to four days if no rain is forecast. Successful plant growing is vastly aided if you really soak the planting hole after loosening the base of the hole especially in very dry periods making sure your plants are well moistened before planting out in new positions. It is very surprising how much water is needed to really reach the bottom of small pots as when turning them out to plant they can still be quite dry at the bottom of the pot. This is the reason that I advocate “double treating” plants especially as the first water will rush through quickly - but don't be misled because it hasn't soaked into the soil - but by watering again you will see them absorb the water. Make sure also to water right under the leaves of plants such as Hostas and Geraniums or it will just run off the top of their large leaves.

Keep deadheading everywhere to prolong flowering. Trim roses to an outward facing bud or leaf joint as a way of keeping a nice neat shape to the bush. In fact any pruning or trimming should always be carried out in this way not

leaving an ugly bare stem. Always snip down to a leaf node or joint. Pansies is can be a problem but they will benefit from being kept neat. Take all the old stem away with the wilted flower (if you squeeze the back of the bloom you will feel a large bump - the seed pod - this will show the difference between a newly opened bud and a fading flower which can seem similar). These pretty plants can be successfully rejuvenated after removing them from pots of Spring displays. Add some compost to deep holes tuck the straggly growth minus dead heads and push the old root ball deeply into the soil around the edge of borders or to liven up the rockery. Keep staking plants as strong wind and heavy rain will soon make a hash of borders with tall plants. Use three to four canes and strong sisal string around large clumps of floppy stems and individual supports for Delphinium and Lupin spikes. Take out the central bloom to encourage lower buds to develop then when all the flowers have finished remove the whole stem to stimulate later flowers in the Autumn. Tall Antirrhinums can also be treated in the same way. Some feed will improve their recovery after being cut back. Dahlias grown in pots could be useful a useful filler for empty spaces where plants have died away early.

Keep an eye on Roses for evidence of black spot disease on the leaves an aphid infestation on the buds. These should be sprayed to deter these problems on still quiet evenings when bees are less in evidence. Wisteria should be trimmed back to three to four leaves from the main structure to keep a tidy shape. Any long shoots needed to add to the framework can be tied in. Keeping the framework close and tidy will encourage flowers from the remaining short stubs. Climbing roses also need long new growths tied in horizontally to encourage flower buds along length of shoot.

Feed tomatoes weekly take out the growing tip when three to four trusses of fruit have formed but leave a pair of leaves at the top to draw up nutrients to the flowers to form fruit.

Sow lettuce, spinach and carrots. These can be planted where main crop potatoes have been harvested. Pick courgettes and runner beans while they are young and small. Remove flowers from rhubarb and stop picking stop stems to give plant time to build up again to produce them next year. Cut back any tatty large leaves on strawberries when they have finished fruiting. If you then water and feed the bed you may find a few berries later in the season.

Raise the mower blades in dry weather using the cuttings to mulch around Roses and shrubs. This will discourage weeds and hold moisture in the soil. Don't however pile them up stems of plants.

Keep lawn edges tidy and sharp to set off a well-maintained lawn. Keep watering on dry days preferably in the evenings giving a thorough soak every

few days not a small sprinkle every evening. Spraying beans will aid pollination of the flowers.

Take a look at the garden and see if you can squeeze in any more insect loving plants - open Daisy type flowers and all types of herbs and Salvia, Nepeta, Lavender and Buddleia will bring colour, scent and attract bees to the garden which will aid fertilisation of your crops.

I hope that Jottings while maybe describing actions that might be “old hat” to some people will encourage gardeners old as I can still find new ideas and tips to learn from even though I've been enjoying this gardening life for more than 60 years!

*Christine Brown,
President, Ash Horticultural Society*

Stories from the Archives (75)

When the Coroner came to Ash

While delivering an illustrated talk earlier this year about the many pubs that used to thrive in the village of Ash, as well as throughout the outermost parts of this parish, there was little opportunity to dwell on some of the less well-known roles of these ancient inns and taverns.

For example, many of the well-established hostelries, whether large or not, were from time to time the venue for local property auctions. Houses and farms were frequently sold during the 18th century after auctions held at the Chequer, the Ship, the Lion or the Bull's Head. Later on, especially during the Victorian period, most of the larger local auctions moved to Canterbury's hotels. Additionally, Ash pubs regularly hosted a variety of events such as music concerts, clubs and society AGMs, parish church vestry meetings, thespian performances, various community functions and public assemblies, Turnpike Trust meetings and – at the Red Lion at Each End – the annual gatherings of the Polyanthus Festival! In Wingham, of course, the Justices of the Peace held their bi-monthly Petty Sessions Court hearings at the Red Lion and The Dog alternately.

What else? One further activity that took place in a number of local pubs during the 18th and 19th centuries was not a regular occurrence despite being fairly frequent, and nor was it an event held at more than a few hours' notice at most. This was the Coroner's Inquest, often called by the County or East Kent Coroner only the day before the meeting and sometimes even on the same day. In an age before telephones or other modern communications media, especially in rural areas, it is remarkable that a sudden or unexplained death could be followed less than 24 hours later by a formal inquest chaired by the Coroner in the locality of the deceased's home or place of death.

By far the most common venue for these inquests was a public house in the nearest village, and sometimes not even in a village but out in the countryside itself. A jury of at least a dozen men was required to assemble and this group was gathered together very quickly indeed, the parish constable being responsible for contacting and summoning sufficient men for the inquest to take place on that or the following day. How did he manage this so rapidly? Well, the parish constable was not a police officer – he pre-dated police forces in England – but was a local man appointed by the annual parish vestry (clergy, churchwardens, parish overseer, leading parishioners etc) to maintain order and to liaise with the local Justices of the Peace. He knew all the reliable householders and would summon between a dozen and two dozen property owners, farmers, tradesmen and artisans to attend the forthcoming inquest. Before any evidence was taken the jury would be sworn in and would sit “on the body” or “over the body.” This means that the assembled men, together with the Coroner, would gather in the back room of a public house and “view the body” before entering into their deliberations.

Thus we see in April 1863 at the Lion Inn, Mr W.P. Callaway, deputy coroner, held an inquest over the body of Ann Castle, a 62-year-old woman who'd been found dead on the road between Ash and Sandwich. She had walked to the Cinque Port and begun her return the following day but, severely out of breath as she apparently often was, was seen to collapse. The alarm was given and James Hook rushed to the scene but was too late to assist. So there in the pub in Ash Street, Mr Callaway heard the evidence and directed his jury to return a verdict of “Died of Disease of the Heart” in line with the opinion of Dr Sladden.

Fifteen years later another elderly woman died on the roadside. Dinah Sutton, 81 and of no fixed abode, left the Red Lion at Each End on a Friday evening late in October and was found the next morning not far away by a passing labourer, her head lying in a ditch. Her face was covered in mud and when Dinah was lifted up it was clear she was dead. She was carried straight back to the pub she'd visited the previous night, where the Coroner and jury could hardly suggest anything other than “Death from suffocation.” Incidentally, the Red Lion was very close to the parish boundary and was just as frequently referred to as the Red Lion, Woodnesborough as the Red Lion at Ash. It is not always easy to distinguish this pub from the Lion in Ash Street, which at times in the 19th century was also referred to locally by some as the Red Lion.

It is likely that this same Red Lion was used by Mr Eaden, Deputy Coroner, when fourteen-year-old John Brissenden drowned in July 1855. William Belsey of Marshborough had seen him undress before entering some water at about 11 o'clock, but later noticed only his clothes on the bank. The water, between three and nine feet deep in places, was dragged for three hours before the body was recovered. A verdict of “Drowned” was the Woodnesborough jury's

only possible option but whether the lad had been out of his depth or had had an attack of cramp could not be established.

No 19th century Coroner appeared more frequently at inquests in Ash pubs than did T.T. Delasaux, and it was he who led the jury at an inquest at the Ship Inn in October 1844. This followed the shooting in cold blood of farmer Richard Cobus by his son George which shocked the whole district [see *Horror at Cop Street*, Stories from the Archives, No46]. The hearing at the Ship Inn was a harrowing one, not least because George's brother had to give difficult evidence but also because George had already openly admitted to committing the crime. He had described pains in his head over a period of more than two years but knew no reason why he had committed the deed. The coroner directed the jury to deliver a verdict of "wilful murder by George Cobus" and decided that the murder was committed "under an aberration of intellect, having at various times threatened to kill his father." This story, which had begun in Cop Street and continued at the Ship Inn and the Canterbury House of Correction did not end until fully 60 years later, with George's eventual death in Broadmoor after many years of incarceration there.

Only three years before the Cobus murder Mr Delasaux had held a previous inquest in an Ash pub, this one at the Lion in our Street. Even before the jury could be sworn in, the Coroner had to push his way through a dense throng of people in the Street and make his way into the over-crowded room. Public interest throughout the village and the wider area was intense. The deceased was not, this time, laid out in the pub but the body had been deposited "in a shell in a dead-house at the parish church." So, following the preliminaries, the Coroner and jury, as well as a county magistrate, then extricated themselves from the building and made their difficult way through the crush and across the road to the church to view the body. This was nineteen-year-old Elizabeth Hook of New Street, who had been employed by a Harnet Street doctor in Sandwich. Her sudden disappearance several weeks earlier had puzzled everyone and rumours abounded that she had taken her own life. The urgent need to locate and interview a particular witness meant the inquest had to be adjourned twice during the following week or so, leading to increased speculation and the return of the melee outside the Lion each time, with the "excitement increased to a feverish height." Eventually, the evidence persuaded Delasaux to decide on suicide by poison, adding that it was not a case of insanity but of "mental derangement." A few days later poor Elizabeth was lowered into her grave in the churchyard, but not before her elderly grandmother had also been interred just five days earlier, having died as soon as the girl was discovered after the dreadful worry that had followed her disappearance many weeks earlier. [See *Tragedy at New Street*, Stories from the Archives, No 28 for a full account].

Being premises of an ample dimension it is not surprising the Chequer was regularly chosen for Coroners' inquests. In 1884 the jury sat "on the body" of Sid Beer, who had fallen to his death from a haystack and in July 1861 Mr Delasaux paid us one of his many visits when "a respectable jury held an inquest on the body of James Collard" who had "been in a state of intoxication for three weeks." Whether the Chequer had been his favourite hostelry is not recorded but that's certainly where he ended up. Lying drunk in the road and threatening to murder anyone who had offered to help him, he had eventually been assisted by three local men named Wilson, Pysden and Stone and had been carried home, but died shortly afterwards. Dr Sladden found only minor bruises but as a result of the testimonies offered by witnesses he concluded Collard had died from a disease of the brain caused by his inebriation. The jury returned a verdict of death "by excessive drinking."

Back at the Lion again in 1901, an unusual case involved the death of an unknown male baby discovered on a bank of the River Stour - in, of all containers, a brown paper bag. Infanticide (for such was the verdict) was not at all rare but had certainly become less common by this time. "Death by drowning" was apparently obvious to all but, sadly, the child remained unidentified.

Finally, we return to the days when Mr Delasaux was a regular visitor here on such sad occasions. This time, in 1859, a death in a pub itself meant the body was already *in situ* when the parish constable set about convening a jury and summoning the Coroner. Mrs Price had been the wife of the landlord of the Crooked Billet in New Street and "on Sunday, she was sitting in her room when a vein in her leg near the ankle burst. Medical aid was speedily sent for but in seven minutes she was dead." Death was on the Sunday, the inquest on the Monday and news appeared in the local paper on the Tuesday. That's pretty quick but perfectly usual - they didn't hang about in those days. One thought remains. How would they have coped today with all these pubs closing?

The office of Coroner goes back to the 12th century and their records can be very helpful to researchers. However, in practice most collections have been "weeded" over the years before being transferred to a suitable archives repository and the papers for many cases have not survived. For cases since the early 18th century, therefore, the richest source for tracing inquest reports has been the local newspapers of the time.

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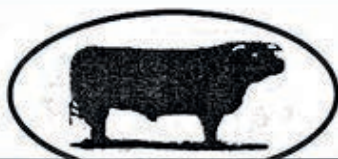
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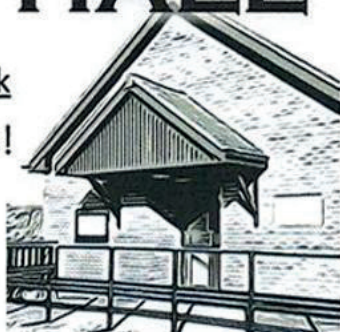


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