

The Lenham Focus

JANUARY 2024 issue

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Editorial

Happy New Year to all our readers, advertisers and volunteers – and a massive ‘thank-you’ to the newly-formed Lenham Lights committee who worked wonders in getting the big Christmas lights switch-on event organised at the end of November at such short notice.

It attracted a huge crowd with everyone enjoying the beginning of the Christmas festivities.

David Jackson
Editor



HELPERS ARE NEEDED for delivering your magazines. Particularly the *Douglas Road*, *Maidstone Road* and the new *Liberty View* homes. If you can spare a little time each month - only about 20 minutes a month – then please email me at editorialslf@outlook.com and we'll explain everything.

We welcome your input and comments please email me at editorialslf@outlook.com

FOCUS is also online at www.lenhamparish.org.uk (Click on ‘Lenham Focus’)

Volume 31 Edition 1 (January 2024)

Circulation 2,100 to Lenham Village (plus shops, library, pubs etc.), Lenham Heath, Platts Heath, Sandway, West Street, Woodside Green, Warren Street and to various Harrietsham outlets.

Copy Deadline:

By 1st of the preceding month to editorialslf@outlook.com or by phone/text on **07714 311008**. Photos of the village and local events are welcome.

Published by Lenham Focus

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Advertising Rates and Sizes (H x W) (approx including borders). PDF format (300dpi) preferred.

1/8 Page (45x61mm) <i>Landscape</i>	£13
1/4 Page (92x61mm) <i>Portrait</i>	£21
1/2 Page (92x123mm) <i>Landscape</i>	£38
Full Page (185x123mm) <i>Portrait</i>	£69
Special requests/inserted leaflets	POA

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Director: Russell Smith

Distribution: Jon Sneath 07971 249137

Print & design: www.gemini-print.co.uk

A New Year message to FOCUS readers

From our MP, Helen Whately

At this time of year, spring can feel like a long way off. Waking up with another frost on the ground, to grey skies and naked trees, muddy fields and flooded rivers, it's easy to forget just how lucky we are. Because when spring does roll around – no matter how many you've seen – it is impossible not to be blown away by just how beautiful our county becomes.

We are blessed to live in and around some of the most wonderful countryside on earth. It sustains so many local people's way of life and wellbeing, and it provides a setting for so many of the things that we do in our free time. It's no surprise that protecting it is one of the issues people write to me about most often.

Sadly in recent years we have seen a worrying decline in nature and biodiversity, not just locally but across the UK. There are plenty of reasons for this – from climate change to pollution, modern farming practices to development. The good news is twofold. Firstly, we've seen time and again that given the chance nature can recover. It's proven to be far more resilient than we expected, and projects up and down the UK have shown its capacity to bounce back. Secondly, there is so much energy and ingenuity being channelled into solutions at a local and national level.

Since 2010 we have created or restored wildlife habitats the size of Dorset, and back in 2021 we went further by passing the world-leading Environment Act. It sets out legally binding targets to protect our environment, clean up our air and rivers and boost nature. Here in Kent we recently saw the launch of Making Space

for Nature in Kent and Medway – our local plan to reverse the decline in biodiversity and create a network of wildlife-rich places.

This is where you come in, because to get this right we'll need collaboration from government, businesses, landowners, and local communities – all working together to make a difference.

It's why I've made environmental improvements one of my 5 local priorities for Faversham and Mid Kent, and this month I'm writing to every Parish Council in the constituency with things we can do locally. Community solar projects, planting trees, building electric charging points, restoring public spaces and so much more. I want as many people as possible to get involved, however they can and in any way they'd like.

Please do keep an eye out as we head towards spring for projects going on in your local area, or feel free to get in touch with my office to be kept up to date. Together we can finally be the generation that leaves our natural environment in a better place than we inherited it.

Wishing you all the best for the year ahead.

Helen



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You will see regular updates on all the parish council's activities in the Focus, our website and social media.

Happy New Year from Lenham Parish Council!

First, huge thanks go to the Christmas lights teams, both old and new, for a fabulous show! The parish council was pleased to be able to intervene in the background to ensure that the Christmas-themed decorations went ahead as usual. Well done to everyone involved.

Plans for this year

We hope that this year the parish council will be able to move forward on some of the capital projects we have been keen to deliver.

The first on our list is to reconfigure the **public toilets** in Maidstone Road. These have been closed for some while because every time we reopened them, they were vandalised, which cost us (and you) several thousand pounds to repair.

The plan is to completely reconfigure the toilets within the existing footprint and in so doing increase the security. As we now have permission from Maidstone Borough Council to undertake the work (MBC still owns the toilets – we lease from them), hopefully we will be able to start this in the Spring.

Next on our list is **additional off-road parking**. This is more complicated as it will require a planning application and agreement from MBC and KCC. The parish council is acutely aware of the need for extra off-road parking but options to deliver this are very limited. We are, however, working with a landowner to attempt to deliver this.

The parish council has noted the recent comments on social media about parking on the roads, this is not an area over which we have any control whatsoever. We can only try and influence those organisations which do have the authority to make changes in those situations. Ultimately, though, poor parking is down to the drivers involved.

Finally, the parish council is keen to get on with creating a **new nursery**. This is an ambition in the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan. The proposal is to create a two-classroom nursery on the ground adjacent to the allotments in Ham Lane (and opposite Lenham Primary School). This would allow the primary school to expand into the classroom currently occupied by the nursery. Clearly this is a longer-term project, however, the parish council has already received planning permission for this proposal so, once the funds are secured it can go ahead.

The preparations to the alteration to the **footpath in the High Street** are well in hand.

... and finally

At the time of writing this (early December) we are unclear of any outcomes from the review of the Maidstone Local Plan. Once the Inspector has reviewed all the responses (LPC's response is available to view in full on the website) he will eventually write to Maidstone BC with his final views and instructions. We will then have six weeks to decide what to do next.



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It's Panto time..



At the time of writing, we have just completed the Christmas lights turn on in Lenham, and we had a fantastic time entertaining the crowds with our pantomime dame bringing her own brand of mayhem.

Rehearsals are going amazingly, and we are really looking forward to seeing you all at the

performances. When this issue comes out, we will be in the final stages of rehearsals and in performance mood.

So, if you haven't got your tickets yet, now is the time to get them, so come along and boo the baddies, cheer the goodies and marvel at how the cast deal with the off script dame. This promises to be an amazing show.

For tickets, please contact:
tickets@hamsproductions.org
or call 07731 455 677.

Looking to the future we are recruiting new members both on the stage and in a supportive role. The membership for performers is just £5 a year.

There are no production fees as we believe that amateur theatre should be for everyone, HAMS Productions is a diverse and a fully open group, so no previous experience is required to join us.

We will be running workshops in 2024 so keep an eye open in the Focus and on Facebook.

If you are interested in joining us or would like more information, please contact **chair@hamsproductions.org**

David - Chair



Lenham Primary School

Christmas Events

Budding journalists Molly D Root–Hicks and Poppy A Streeter give their take on Christmas at the Primary School

Nativity

Year 1 and 2's Nativity was really good and also very cute. We could tell exactly what they were doing. They had an amazing performance! Their singing was marvellous! We had a lovely time watching them and so did the parents.

Carol Concert

The Carol Concert was very fun but freezing. All of the parents were smiling and cheering for us, it was an amazing concert for everyone. We sang lots of songs that we had been practising in singing assemblies including; 'Run Run Rudolph' and 'Feliz Navidad'.

Christmas Dinner

We had an amazing Christmas jumper day. It was incredible, we were allowed to wear our own Christmas jumpers and then at lunchtime we had a delicious roast dinner with roast turkey, pigs in blankets, potatoes, stuffing and lots more. We even got Christmas Santa hats! We also had a special visit from **SANTA!**

Choir Songs at The Hub Club

A group of children went to the People's Hub Club and sang lots of Christmas songs. They all loved it. The teachers were saying to them afterwards that they did an amazing job. The people were clapping and tapping their feet.

Parent Showrounds for New Year R Parents

As we are Year 6 we get to show the New Year R parents around the school; this is a very fun job and we love to be chosen. In Year R they have an amazing teacher (Mrs Miller). They have a huge variety of playing space including lots of toys, some art stuff, and an amazing outside area that they can play in and make mud cakes. They also have a big variety of dress up outfits like Elsa, Snow White, Anna and police high-vis.

[Headteacher: Andrea McCluskey,
www.lenham.kent.sch.uk]

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The Arts Society brings people together through a shared curiosity for the arts

New Year is the perfect time to try The Arts Society Egerton as we offer **DISCOUNTED MEMBERSHIP!**

Membership for the remaining 5 months of our 2023-24 season costs just £22.40 (£40 for joint membership). Visitors are always welcome to attend for £6 per meeting.

Our lectures for 2024 begin in February and end in June. They are presented by renowned experts in their fields. You may know some of them through their publications or appearances on TV or radio. They share their knowledge and expertise in ways that are stimulating, educational and entertaining. Lectures take place in the Millennium Hall in Elm Close TN27 9DS on the second Wednesday of the month at 2.30 pm. Forthcoming lectures:

February 14th: The History of the Royal School of Needlework with Susan Kay-Williams

March 13th: The Men who made Menswear with Russell Nash

April 10th: The Dancing Faun: a personal Story of a Masterpiece with Bertie Pearce

May 8th: Uncompromising Genius: the Life and Work of Frank Lloyd Wright with Fiona Rose

June 12th: West End Winners – the rise of the British Musical from Noel Coward to Lionel Bart with Dr John Snelson

From 2024 we will launch a new programme of visits to places of cultural interest in Kent and London. Members also receive discounts at the West House Gallery in Smarden.

At an additional cost we will offer a Study Day in May with BBC Antique's Roadshow's **Mark Hill** entitled Undressing Antiques, including valuations of 20th century ceramics and glass.

Our 2024-25 season starts in September. For further details about this and other lectures visit our website.

To find out more please visit: <https://theartssocietyegerton.org.uk/> or contact our Membership Secretary Christine on cmwillis75@gmail.com or 01233 756377



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World Braille Day – 4th January

Facts about Braille with thanks from BrailleWorks

World Braille Day was created to commemorate Louis Braille and his contribution to the world. He created braille as a means of communication for people who are blind. Mr. Braille was born in France on 4 January 1809 and lost his sight after an accident when he was a child.



Braille used for math is different than braille used for writing the alphabet. Nemeth is the name of one system for writing math in braille.

Sheet music also has its own version of braille. Instead of letters, the dots represent parts of music.

Louis Braille developed the fingertip reading system known as braille after Charles Barbier visited Louis's School for the Blind. Charles Barbier was a captain in Napoleon's army, and he shared a communication code called Night Writing with the students. Louis was ten years old when he met Charles, but by age 15, with his new communication system, Louis had forever changed the lives of people who are blind.

Braille is not its own language but rather a code that can be used in many languages. Writers use different grades of braille depending on preference. Grade 1 braille is typically the starting point for braille readers. It includes the 26 letters in the English alphabet as well as numbers, punctuation, and more. Grade 2 includes contractions of letters and words. Some writers use shorthand braille, Grade 3, in notes and personal letters.

In January 2016, the standard for English braille changed resulting in English-speaking countries all using the same version. Before that the United States' version was different to the one used in the United Kingdom. The new standard even has extra characters to let readers know where the emphasis (capitalisation, bold, underlining, etc.) goes.

In braille, 6 dots make up a cell. There are 64 braille cell combinations, including an empty cell. Braille cells are roughly the same size as 29pt Arial font. That means when standard print material is transcribed to braille, it takes up nearly three times more pages.

The United Nations General Assembly declared World Braille Day an international day in late 2018, and the first celebration was on January 4, 2019. Braille has a day designated to it because of the impact it has had on human rights for people with blindness. However, many people celebrated World Braille Day before the United Nations recognised it.

As you can see, braille is far from boring. This tactile reading and writing system provides the opportunity for literacy to millions of people around the world.

See **BrailleWorks.com**





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A message from Ceri Norey, Chair of Governors at Lenham Primary School

Do you have some spare time on your hands? Do you want to ensure that the education for all children in Lenham is the best it can be?

Then why not consider becoming a school governor at Lenham Primary School? Governors come from all walks of life and different backgrounds and collectively possess the skills required to contribute to the strategic oversight to make the school a success.

Ceri says: 'You do not need any formal qualifications or specific requirements for the role; every governing body needs a balance and diversity of knowledge and skills and experiences. You don't need to be a parent or have a background in education. You just need to be able to commit to meeting 6 times a year to discuss the strategic leadership and visions for the school.'

What is school governance?

Anyone over the age of 18 can be a school governor, subject to some exceptions.

School governors play a vital role in making key decisions and shaping the direction of schools. The duties are mainly performed behind the scenes, and under codes of confidentiality. School governors collectively are required to complete a variety of roles these include:

- ensuring the clarity of the school's strategic vision and ethos,
- holding leaders to account over educational performance,
- overseeing the financial performance of the school, and
- ensuring that decisions are inclusive of the views of pupils, parents, staff and the local community.

What can governance do for you?

It can be challenging and rewarding in equal measure. It provides you with the opportunity to develop and hone skills such as negotiation, influence and teamwork. It can help young people in your local community, and it's also a chance to gain transferrable skills (leadership, strategy and management to name just a few) to support your own personal and professional development.

Why you? Why Now?

Ceri continues: 'If you live or work in or near to the parish of Lenham then you will know that our community is expanding. Lenham Primary school needs your help. It too will in time expand to meet the growth of the village and its families. We need people from the community to join our friendly governance committee to ensure that the children of Lenham get the best educational deal they can. Maybe you are new to the village or you were once a student at Lenham Primary, either way we need people like you!

Get in contact, email me at **Ceri.norey@lenham.kent.sch.uk** for a friendly chat and to find out more about being a governor at Lenham Primary.



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MIND THE GAP! – What is the ‘Registration Gap’ and how might it affect you?

With thanks from Kate Fenwick of Hallett and Co. 01233-625711
www.hallettandco.co.uk

The journey of property ownership is often accompanied by excitement, anticipation, and a myriad of legal processes.

However, even after acquiring the keys and taking possession of a property, buyers/tenants may have to wait up to 24 months before being formally recognised as the legal owner because the Land Registry has a major delay in processing registrations of newly purchased property.

This phenomenon, known as the ‘Registration Gap’, poses a challenge for both property practitioners and buyers alike, raising questions about the legal position and potential risks associated with delayed registration.

Legal vs Equitable owners

During the Registration Gap, the period between completion and registration, the purchaser would be considered as the equitable owner of the property because they have not yet been registered as the legal owner by the Land Registry. If you are an equitable owner, you only obtain a beneficial interest of the property. This relates to the economic interest in the property and a right to the proceeds of the sale of the property, but you won’t be able to deal with the property in the unlimited way as the person with the legal interest.

Why does this matter? How might it affect you?

The impact of the Registration Gap is particularly pronounced in cases of purchasing property for commercial purposes; for example, buyers purchasing



a property for the purpose of buying-to-let - specifically if an eviction becomes necessary. In absence of registration, proving ownership during eviction proceedings can be challenging and may cause significant delays in critical situations where swift action is required, for example if the tenant has missed rent payments or damaged the property.

The purchaser may not have full legal backing to be able to enforce eviction during the period of registration, because they are not yet considered as the legal owner, which can have major financial consequences. Not only will the purchaser have missing rent payments but will also incur additional legal costs trying to prove ownership and evict the tenant. The inability to swiftly resolve tenancy issues can impact the buyers’ cash flow and overall return on investment. Therefore, those looking to invest in property for buy-to-let purposes should seek legal advice to navigate potential pitfalls during the Registration Gap.

For those purchasing a home for residential use, there are also potential risks associated with prolonged land registration. Buyers cannot fully enjoy legal protections connected with property ownership, impacting their ability to address potential property disputes or enforce their rights effectively. For example, if a boundary dispute were to arise in this period, it is likely that the buyer will find it challenging and costly to assert their legal rights because they do not have the relevant documentation to definitively prove the property's boundary and their ownership of the same.

Lastly, if the property is not officially registered in the purchaser's name, it may pose challenges when attempting to finance, re-finance, sell, or transfer the property. Lenders often prefer properties with clear and registered titles, so the buyer may encounter a hinderance to financial plans and investments that were contingent on the timely registration.



Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny

Friday January 12th

**Performance begins 19.30,
doors open 19.00**

Running time 2 hrs 34 mins + interval

Yes, it's Indiana Jones back for one last memorable adventure in Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny (12, 2023). Harrison Ford returns, reprising his iconic role as our favourite onscreen archaeologist, trying to save the world yet again. The film takes place in 1969, with Indy on the verge of retirement. He has a visit from his goddaughter, archaeologist Helena Shaw (played by Phoebe Waller-Bridge), eager to see the Dial which Indy had saved from Nazi Jürgen Voller during World War 2. But Indiana only has half of the Dial and Voller, who is now working for NASA, is intent on regaining it. Sparks fly in the race that begins in earnest, not just for



**LENHAM
FILM CLUB**

at Lenham Community Centre, Groom Way

one but both halves of the Dial. Come along to watch Harrison Ford on our big screen as he triumphs yet again in his inimitable role. We'll hold a 15-minute interval halfway through the film. Wine, soft drinks, tea and coffee are available to purchase.

Directed by James Mangold

Our February performance is the superb Green Book (2018), which won a Best Film Oscar and tells the story of an unlikely friendship between a classical pianist and his driver, set against the backdrop of segregation and racism in the deep south USA during the 1960's.

Please get in touch for more information or to join our mailing list.

Admission: Members £4, Non-members £5, under 16 £2, Under 5 free.



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Lenham Meadows Trust

Countryside and community

A new year message from our chairman

Happy New Year! I hope you and your families had a wonderful Christmas.

2023 was yet another great year for Lenham Meadows Trust. We acquired a new piece of land, Kettle Meadow in Lenham Heath. Kettle Meadow is a lowland meadow which has diverse habitats and a wide range of flora; we're looking forward to conserving this lovely meadow and protecting it from any future development. We're currently developing our plans for Kettle Meadow but intend holding educational and open events later this year.

We took part in The Big Help Out in May 2023, which was one of the events arranged over Coronation weekend. Around 70 volunteers helped us with maintenance at Glebe Pond (which we own) and Jubilee Garden (which we manage on behalf of Thorneloe Solicitors). Jubilee Garden is situated behind Thorneloe Solicitors, just off The Square; do pop in and sit for a while - you'll find the entrance on Old Ashford Road, next to the bus stop. October 2023 saw us return to the beautiful Tithe Barn

for our third Apple Pressing Fun Day. Despite a generally poor apple crop last year, the event saw record numbers join us for a fun day out, with music, food, games and stalls alongside the apple pressing.

As always, we're grateful to the volunteers, charities and local businesses who supported us throughout the last year. The Trust is now looking forward to 2024, with the hope of further land acquisition. We're ready to get plans underway for educational and fundraising events this year; we look forward to sharing our plans with you in the near future.

We're currently looking to expand our management team and are looking for people to help us manage the Trust, assist with communications and with co-ordinating our events. Please do get in touch with us if you would like to join our management team, have time to take part in running our local charity and would like to help us conserve the green spaces around Lenham and the surrounding area.

Danny Matthews, *Chairman*

**Please email us if you'd like to know more about the Trust or to join our mailing list.
Follow us on social media for the latest news, details of events and photos of our projects:**

 enquiries@lenhammeadowstrust.org  www.lenhammeadowstrust.org   [@LenhamMeadows](https://www.instagram.com/LenhamMeadows)

Lenham Meadows Trust 2024 calendar



The beautiful photographs in our 2024 calendar were taken in Lenham and the surrounding area by Lenham-based photographer Nick White (07939 881968). All profits go towards supporting our work.

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Lenham Meadows Trust

Countryside and community

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Lenham Community Centre

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07985 001782

Email: bex.taichi@yahoo.co.uk

www.abundantenergy.uk



The Council meet on the first Wednesday of each month

Finance and General Purpose Committee meetings are the third Wednesday of each month

All meetings are held at the Lenham Community Centre at 7:30pm (or via Zoom)

Parishioners may attend all meetings

Contact details: Lisa Westcott

(Clerk) 01622 829034

clerk@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk

www.lenhamparish.org.uk

Remembrance Day Services 11th and Remembrance Sunday 12th November 2023

Saturday 11th November found a small group gathering outside St Mary's Church close to the stone war memorial to observe the two-minute silence at 11am. The few minutes of reflection included prayers, the reading of the names of those from the Parish lost in both World Wars, the Exhortation and the Epitaph. Naturally, there was also a laying of wreaths.

The following day, Sunday 12th November, was Remembrance Sunday. The morning service in St Mary's Church was very well attended – with a number of the congregation standing at the back. There was a good representation too from the 133 Company, 103 Battalion REME (based in Ashford) – attending to commemorate the particular loss for REME on the 23rd June 1944.

The service included a parade of standards led by a Union Flag (carried by a local Air Cadet) with the REME Association, Sea Cadets, Lenham Scouts and Lenham Brownies attending. As for the day before, during the service the names of those from

the Parish lost in both World Wars were read aloud along with the Exhortation and the Epitaph. Wreaths were placed by the memorials by local groups including Lenham Parish Council and the Lenham Fire Brigade – as well as RBL.

Following the service, attention moved to the cemetery and the REME war grave. The standards led a parade from St Mary's to the Cemetery where the Act of Remembrance was repeated.

During the service, which was again well attended by villagers, the REME platoon placed poppy crosses by each of the headstones of those lost, while a retired REME Piper played a lament. The REME names were read aloud, and poppy wreaths were laid on both the REME memorial and on the Sword of Sacrifice. The weather, fairly typically for this time of year, remained largely dry if chilly. After the ceremony, it is reasonable to say that many returned to enjoy the warmth of the Dog & Bear or the Red Lion while others perused the Farmers Market.

Discussions with REME Association noted that June 2024 will be the 80th Anniversary of the sad events of 23rd June 1944 and as such, 'something special' is being planned. It is hoped that, with planning, coordination and advertising, this anniversary will be marked by the village in recognition both of the sacrifice given then and the ongoing link which all are keen to maintain. When more is known, we will widely circulate information.



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Wednesday 28th February 2024

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We then have a Fish & Chip Lunch in Maz's
Fish & Chip Restaurant in Bexhill—Marino's.

£40 per person

includes cod & chips, mushy peas, bread & butter & a tea or coffee

**Pick ups: 09.00 Carrs Yard, 09.15 Dog & Bear Lenham
09.30 The Rose, Bearsted**

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Email:..... No. of seats:.....@ £40 each

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Nature Watch

The Big Garden Birdwatch – 26-28 January 2024

It's time to register for the **Big Garden Birdwatch** bird count with the RSPB. This helps to give a brief snapshot of how the birds are doing in our gardens and parks. Registration started in December on the RSPB website and the count itself will be over the weekend of the 26–28 January.

It's very simple to complete and gives you a great excuse to just relax and watch nature for (at least) an hour. The way it works is that you sit and observe for an hour in your chosen area; your garden or a park for example, and in that time you note which type of bird visits and how many you see. Only those birds that actually land in the trees or on the ground however. The way to note down the number is simple; you write down the highest number of birds you see at one time. For example, if you see 5 sparrows in the first 10 minutes but then in the last 10 minutes you see 12 you note down 12 sparrows.

We have lost 38m birds from British skies in the last 50 years, therefore it is very important that we keep an eye on what we have left. Below are some of the top 10 birds seen last year by the 700,000 people who took part.



The **House Sparrow** was number 1 but has suffered huge losses in number. Has a charm and beauty all of its own even though is a fairly non-descript brown. Often seen in large numbers as they forage for food in hedges and clumps of bushes.



The small but mighty **Blue Tit** is a very colourful bird that has quite a bit of character. Often seen in small flocks hunting through trees and bushes for food. Can be quite feisty among themselves too as they sometimes squabble over food sources.



The exotic looking **Goldfinch** is doing fairly well and becoming more common in our gardens and fields and is at number 7 on the list. Can be very brightly coloured and usually travels in numbers.

The **Great Tit** is the bigger cousin of the blue tit and has its own colourful feather display to show off. While they may be bigger they are more timid and will fly off quickly when disturbed.



The plain looking **Blackbird** still has its charms and is one of the most common birds in our gardens. The males are a black colour with a yellow or orange beak and the females are a brownish colour sometimes with spots or stripes and a brown beak.

Surely one of the cutest of our garden visitors is the little **Long-tailed Tit**. Has a distinctive pip as its call and a very long tail. In the winter they travel in small flocks looking for food and to huddle together to keep warm. A load of character and very quick as they flit about.



Helen Whately MP



Member of Parliament for
Faversham and Mid Kent.

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Lenham WI

The latest news from Chris Godden

This year we look forward every month to more good speakers – Islands of the Midway; Women in Policing; Ghosts; Bumble Bees; and Quiz and Games Nights.

At Federation level we will be going to the Annual General Meeting in March, Lifestyle Days, Craft Workshops and Whist Days. Our AGM is held in Tunbridge Wells and the speakers this year are Dr Annie Gray, who is one of the country's leading food historians, and Lindsay Barrell (aka Ms Cherry Bombe) talking about "Burlesque, Me and the WI". Nationally we have the opportunity to vote on one of four resolutions. This year they are:



Dental Health Matters

The WI calls on the Government to increase investment in the training and retention of dentists and review the inadequate NHS

contracts to ensure that everyone can access an NHS dentist. Currently one in four people need dentist treatment but are not able to sign up to an NHS dentist.



Impacts of Poor Housing Conditions

The WI will ask the UK Government to boost housing standards and regulations,

increase funding for renovation and increase the supply of affordable and secure housing. Ten million people in England are living in homes that fall below the minimum standard for housing with over one million on social housing waiting lists. In May 2023 the Renters Reform Bill was introduced which would abolish the Section 21 "no fault" evictions. In July 2023 the Social Housing Act hoped to improve the quality of social housing but at a cost of £18 million to local councils. The WI is asking the Government to provide appropriate funding for this.

Say "No" to gambling advertising

The WI is calling on the Government, regulators, the NHS, educationalists and gambling charities to work together with them to ban gambling advertising. The problem is widespread with around 400 people per annum attempting suicide; 300,000 individuals are experiencing problems whilst 1.8 million are gambling at elevated levels. Italy and Belgium have already banned gambling advertising so it can be done.



Improving outcomes for women in the criminal justice system

The WI wants to see cross-government collaboration to deliver the 2018 female offender strategy to reduce the number of women, pregnant women and mothers who have committed non-violent offences from being imprisoned. It is estimated that 17,000 children are affected by maternal imprisonment each year and 600 pregnant women enter prison each year with 50 in prison at any one time.



Every WI member can vote for one of these resolutions and the one with the highest number of votes will be adopted.

This month the WI is launching the WI Learning Hub. The WI was born out of a need to educate women and the Hub will provide a rich variety of learning experiences for members. Courses will be online and many of them will be free of charge.

So nationally, county wide and locally the WI provides something for everyone.

We meet at Lenham Community Centre on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm. If you'd like to join us please contact me on 01622 858658 or email rrgodden@btinternet.com

Book Review

From the Lenham Library

I have chosen a very light easy read this month. I had heard of Mike Gayle but never tried one of his books. I was prompted to do so by a glowing review of his latest novel, 'A Song of Me and You.'

I admit I had to get over my initial response to the grammar of the title. I will correct every "me and you" I hear to "you and I/me" until my dying day, but that was the only quibble I had. Yes, it's a romantic novel, but it swept me along even when the plot was a little far-fetched. The characters were entirely credible and I really cared what happened to them.

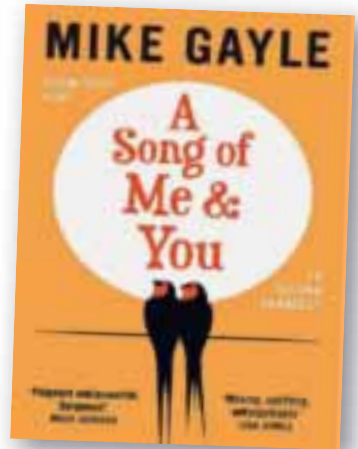
I did a little research and found that Mike Gayle was the first male and the first person of colour ever to win the Romantic Novelist's Association's top prize.

Previously an Agony Uncle, Mike Gayle is a freelance journalist who has contributed to a variety of magazines including FHM, Sunday Times Style and Cosmopolitan. He has written over a dozen novels and I will definitely be reading the others currently in stock at Lenham Library or available from other branches.


The plot of this one concerns Helen, who thinks of herself as a washed-up, middle-

aged, part-time primary school teacher with a broken marriage and her best years behind her. She opens her front door one day to find Ben, an award-winning singer with a world famous band who had been the love of her life when she was eighteen, standing there. He is suffering from burn out and needs a place to hide. The plot deals quite a bit with male mental health which is topical. There are some unexpected twists and turns.

Ben's celebrity lifestyle introduces possibilities way outside normal life but can relate to everyone. It made me laugh and cry and I read it in one sitting so if you want something to take your mind off everything, this might be the book to do it. It just swept me along.



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Simple Well-being. The essence of loving

The latest 'Simple Well-Being' article from Vladimir Barkanov

As I mentioned in the very first article, love is a very complicated subject. Most people say that love is something of the highest importance in our lives, yet there is lots of confusion about love. In this article, I will address one of the confusions related to loving others.

Everything in the Universe exists in give-and-receive actions, which are the foundation for existence, growth and multiplication. Love is no exception to this rule. However, while any of the other give-and-receive actions are understood correctly, there is a serious misunderstanding about love. In all give-and-receive actions, there are active and passive parts, both of which play equally important roles.

The easiest example is our breathing. Inhale is active and exhale is passive but they are both a part of an essential process. But when people talk about love, they picture it as “giving love to someone and then receiving love from them.” But this is a give-and-receive action with two ACTIVE parts in it. It just could not work. And just to address a possible objection – the fact that one side giving love (active) and the other side receiving it (passive), and then they switch positions, does not work. There must be an outcome of equal value in both the active and the passive parts. In other words, the passive part must be a sufficient return.



It is not as complicated as it may seem. I'll explain this through an example of someone loving flowers. When a person loves a flower, that person learns everything there is to learn about it and creates an ideal environment for the flower. And what does that person expect in return? Does the person expect love from the flower? No. That person wants to see the flower flourish and, when it is achieved, the person experiences joy from perceiving the beauty.

Exactly the same principle is applicable to the relationships between human beings. Love is not a fuzzy feeling in our chest that we feel when we see a particular person. It is an action, directed to help someone to flourish. And an immediate return to our love is not the love of that person, but the beauty of their blossoming.

I am not saying that such love is absent in today's world. We have all had experiences when we did something to others that caused them to bloom, be it for a few minutes or years, and felt more than satisfied with the result. But how much better this world would look if we all begin to practice such love consciously?

We will talk more about loving others in the next article.



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The day is run at a relaxed pace with activities including singing, games and a light physical activity. There is a lot of laughter and chatting over tea and biscuits, where new friendships are formed and clients are given the opportunity to share their experiences and support one another.

Attending the group also offers the additional benefit to carers, enabling a break from their caring role.



**Every Wednesday at Lenham Community Centre 9.30am to 2pm
and Tuesdays and Fridays at Ditton Community Centre 10am to 2.30pm.**
**For more information on our sessions and how to become a member
contact Alison, Helen or Louise for more information**

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The Lenham family festival – 1st June 2024 it's official!

We ask everyone to save the date in their diaries. The event will be at Lenham Community Centre and we hope all will come along and support this event which has been running since its inception in 2012.

We'd like to involve as many different organisations and groups as possible and combine showcasing local musicians, dance and performing with a kind of 'village forum' where local clubs, societies and charities could have tables/stands. We hope the event will assist new people to come and find out what goes on in the community. Promoting the many wonderful organisations and support networks we have within the community which truly give us what we all enjoy.

With of course (?) lovely weather, we will be maximising the use of the outside

garden space at the Centre and encourage a picnic party atmosphere for all. We anticipate promoting an inter society pétanque tournament throughout the day.

We will be making contact with individuals and organisations in the next few weeks. If you want to become directly involved please contact us. We are a friendly bunch who believe there is no "I" in team!

We sincerely hope the concept that began as an idea sitting in Gez Clarkes head (our first Town Crier) which he shared with a few of us and we shaped can be a very special day is again.

We look forward to bringing it to fruition. Local Musicians/performers et al please give us a call.

Tom & Janetta Sams;

On behalf of Lenham Festival Committee
01622 859412/ 07891901831

Contact Details For Local Groups

Badminton	Alan Williamson	01622-858763
Badminton Club Feathers	Neil Rouse	01622-840207
Borough Councillors	Tom & Janetta Sams	01622-859412 / 0789-1901831
Bowling Club	Lyn Fuller	01622-851538
Bridge Club	Keith Rylands	01622-891964
Brownies (2nd Lenham)	Andrea French	01622-851646
Cat Protection	Mid-Kent Branch	0345-3712758
Church Office	Sarah Hills	01622-850604
Dog Warden (Louise Duke)	Community Protection	01622-602117
Drama	Gail Kelly	01622-850671
Drugs Helpline	Free Call	0800-776600
Friends of St Mary's Church	Andrew Barr	enquiries@friendsofmaryslenham.org
Gardening Society	Margaret Baines	01622-431649
Guides (1st Lenham)	Jo Homes	07887-877814
HAMS productions	David Penny	07731-455677
Harrietsham & Lenham Beavers	Duncan Keenan	07768-926654
Harrietsham & Lenham Cubs	Mrs A Seales	01622-859829
Hub Club	Jenny Lloyd/Nina Kent	01622-859208 / 01622-851970
KCC member for Maidstone Rural East	Shellina Prendergast	Shellina.Prendergast@kent.gov.uk
Kent Highway Services	Roads, pavements etc.	03000-418181
Kent Wildlife Trust		01622-662012
Lenham Country Market	Sandra Woodfall	07775-736116
Lenham Community Centre	Carol Higgins	01622-853800 (am)
Lenham Community Gym	Mick McQue	01622-853750
Lenham Film Club	Danny Coorsh	lenhamfilmclub@gmail.com
Lenham Heath Memorial Hall	Rosemarie Pomeroy	01622-858296
Lenham Heritage Society	Henny Shotter	01622-851355
Lenham Lifts scheme	Phil Hollier	01622-859154 / 07542 625277
Lenham Meadows Trust	Danny Matthews	enquiries@lenhammeadowstrust.org
Lenham Parish Council	Lisa Westcott	01622-829034 (M-F 9am-1pm) clerk@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk
Lenham Quilters & Stitchers	Pamela Gillard	01233-879507
Lenham Social Club	Jo Gregory	01622-858890
Lenham Toddlers Group	Irene Hine	01622-858919
Lenham Wanderers FC	Russell Young	07594-206818
Len Valley FC	Paul Hewish	07795-324062
Len Valley Health Walks	Jan Enever	01622-851623
Len Valley Practice	GP surgery	01622-858341 / 859204
Member of Parliament	Helen Whately	helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk
Mothers' Union	Mrs J Thomsett	01622-859009
Patient Participation Group	Teresa New	01622-858341
Pilates Classes	Vivien Elcomb	01622-853887
Redback Explorer Scouts	Mark Horlock	redbackesu@hotmail.com
Rural Community Warden	Martin Sherwood	07977-981993
St Edmunds; Platts Heath	Kate Stansfield	07500-895831
Save Our Heathlands (SOHL)	Kate Hammond	07925-606236
Sing & Shake / Make & Shake	Steph Richardson	07894-160906
Vicar	Rev Dr. John Huggins	01622-850280
Women's Institute	Carole Toner	01622-850048

Lenham Community Centre - Regular Clubs/Classes/Societies - January 2024

ACTIVITY	WHEN HELD	TIME	CONTACT No
Abundant Energy Tai Chi	Weekly Monday	0930-1030	07985 001782
Abundant Energy Qigong	Weekly Monday	1045-1145	07985 001782
Baby Ballet	Friday	0930-1045	07866 316056
Country Ways Knitting	2nd Monday	1330-1630	01622 858658
Country Ways Quilting	1 st & 3 rd Tues	1330-1630	01233 879507
Country Ways Rugmaking	2nd & last Wed	0900-1300	07784 892160
Craft & Chat	2 nd Wednesday	1330-1730	01622 851885
Craft & Chat	Last Saturday	1330-1730	01622 851885
Feathers Badminton	Weekly Monday	2000-2200	07866 151370
Film Club	2nd Friday	19.30-2200	
Gardening Society	3 rd Thursday	1845-2200	01622 430649
Hatha Yoga	Weekly Monday	1815-1945	07850 355918
Kent School of Bridge	Weekly Thursday	1330-1730	01622 891964
LenARA Bowling	Weekly Tuesday	1330-1700	01622 858439
LenARA Line Dancing	Weekly Wednesday	1845-2115	01622 859725
LenARA Members	4th Wednesday	1230-1700	01622 851763
LenARA Petanque	Thursday if weather allows	0900-1300	01622 858439
LenARA Zumba Gold	Weekly Wednesday	0900-1030	01622 850228
Lenham Art Group	Weekly Thursday	1000-1300	01622 858238
Lenham Badminton	Weekly Tuesday	2000-2200	01622 858561
Lenham Ballet School	Monday/Tuesday	1700-2030	01622 850329
Lenham Ballet School	Thursday	1630-2100	01622 850329
Lenham Ballet School	Weekly Saturday	0900-1530	01622 850329
Lenham Heritage	4th Thursday	1900-2130	01622 850228
Lenham Toddlers Pre-school	Weekly Tuesday	0930-1130	01622 858919
Lenham WI	2nd Thursday	1845-2200	01622 858658
Make & Shake (Pre-school)	Weekly Wednesday	1030-1300	07894 160906
Parish Council	1st Wednesday	1930-2230	07894 160906
Parish Council F & G P	3 rd Wednesday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Parish Council Planning	1st Monday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Pathways Church	1st & 3 rd Sunday	0830-1330	01622 850266
Sing & Shake (Pre-school)	Weekly Monday	0930-1300	07894 160906
Telisa Tai Chi	Weekly Wednesday	1730-1830	07734 108683
Zumba with Rosie	Weekly Tuesday	1830-1930	07809 490982



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The latest update from Janetta & Tom Sams, your Borough Councillors

We wish everyone a Happy New Year.

We attended a zoom meeting of other councillors and Parish Councils within the cluster group of Boxley, Detling and Thurnham, Harrietsham and Lenham and North Downs along with the police and Borough Council officers. It was very informative, and we learnt of the new Neighbourhood policing being introduced.

The policing team should be fully resourced by end of January. The current beat officers are Task Force officers, and they will be replaced with regular beat officers. Our Beat officer now is PC Troth. Officers being visible has been prioritised. The difference between the previous model and the new model was explained, specifically in relation to the roles of the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). Regular Beat officers have an array of powers that PCSOs cannot use. The PCSOs have been retained, but in different "problem solving" roles.

The Waste Crime Manager Carl McIvor from MBC provided an update on fly tipping within the cluster. There were discussions around the use of cameras. It was stated that offenders were being prosecuted for failing to manage their waste, and the removal of abandoned vehicles had been progressed.



**TOM &
JANETTA SAMS**
Borough
Councillor



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or 07496 105588**

Additionally, there was discussion and feedback on speeding vehicles, off-road biking and other crimes such as farm thefts and hare coursing. All in all it made us appreciate the efforts being made on behalf of us all with the police and other agencies working together.

Food stations exist within the community in Harrietsham's St John the Baptist Church and in Lenham's St Marys Church. We thank churches, communities and the volunteers for their continued support and assistance. We have been fortunate to receive funding from KCC member's grant fund through our representative Shellina Prendergast and local charitable organisations, whose generous support is so appreciated. Thank you all.

Tom and Janetta Sams; Harrietsham and Lenham Ward Councillors
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If you have NHS hearing aids, come along to your local clinic to get them cleaned, re-tubed and collect new batteries.

ASSISTIVE EQUIPMENT

If you have a hearing loss and pay your Council tax to Kent County Council and are aged 26 and upwards, we can assess your needs for free assistive equipment, like special telephones, hearing loops and conversation aids. We'll invite you to come to one of our centres so that we can demonstrate the assistive equipment available to you. We can do a home visit if travel is not possible for you. If you're eligible, this equipment will then be given to you free of charge on long term loan.

FREE LIPREADING CLASSES

Email Debra Jones at d.jones@hikent.org.uk

FREE TINNITUS SUPPORT GROUPS

Held monthly via Zoom and now face to face in several locations. For further information email tinnitus@hikent.org.uk

BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES LEVELS 1 & 2

Held both face to face and online via Zoom. Contact Zoe Holder: z.holder@hikent.org.uk

DEAF AWARENESS COURSES

Held face to face wherever needed and online via Zoom. Contact Jon Lambert: j.lambert@hikent.org.uk

SOCIAL GROUPS

These have been set up to help combat the social isolation and loneliness and are an opportunity to make new friends in a friendly, informal environment. They're held monthly in each location and refreshments are available. Contact Vicky Kirk at v.kirk@hikent.org.uk

WELLBEING 'GATEWAY' SERVICE

Our free wellbeing service offers an extra service to people with hearing loss. Contact us at enquiries@hikent.org.uk or **01622 691151**.

COUNSELLING SERVICE

If you have a hearing loss or have been impacted in any way by hearing loss and you feel you need to speak to someone confidentially, then we will put you in touch with our BACP trained Counsellor. The sessions are held either online, on the telephone or, sometimes, face to face. Contact counselling@hikent.org.uk

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS

Do you need help with the technology in your life? Phones, tablets, computers, TV's etc?

Hi Kent is offering an advice service to help you. This can be offered at our centres or in the home. Contact: enquiries@hikent.org.uk

Maidstone Office: **01622 691151**

Email: enquiries@hikent.org.uk
www.hikent.org.uk

Until the 19th century most people were not in the financial position to leave their 'place of settlement' and their career changes often took place in the same town or village and sometimes were surprising.



From pub landlord to policeman

In 1830 John Collins and Edward Chambers ran the White Horse Inn (now the Wishful Thinker) in Sandway. The pub was owned by James Douglas Stoddard Esq.

who resided in Chilston Park, and was the largest landowner and most important employer in the Lenham area. John Collins also rented 12 acres of land from him. Possibly this allowed him to widen his trade and in 1841² his profession was given as "victualier". He was 40 years old and living in Sandway with his wife Elizabeth and their six children. His fortune then took a turn for the better. In 1851 he was a policeman and lived in "Lime Row" (today the northeast side of the square) which must have been one of the best addresses in town.

The good old days?

During his time as a policeman in 1850, John Collins was involved in the case of three men who had stolen two tame rabbits from James Smith in Lenham. They were all found guilty with John Neeves getting 15 years transportation, George Baines 12 months hard labour and 2 whippings and

Jessie Brazier 4 months hard labour as he had a little part to play in this.

Perhaps you might remember the case (*Focus*, October 2022) of the clergyman who was, 5 years later, not even reprimanded for accidentally shooting dead Peter Collins, the under-gun-keeper? Peter Collins was John Collin's brother and it is likely that John had to attend the incident as he was the local policeman.

By 1861 John Collins had advanced to Farm Bailiff and collected the rent for the Chilston Estate. He lived with his wife and youngest daughter in the High Street for the next 10 years. He was then seventy years old and of retirement age. He was in the unusual position of receiving a pension and could leave Lenham and retire to a seaside town, to Margate³. There he lived in 1881 at the age of 80 with his wife Elizabeth, 'happily ever after'.



References

1. Thank you to Darren Collins for sharing aspects of his family history with us
2. Census 1841
3. The photo shows Margate from the Harbour in 1897 Detroit Publishing Co., under license from Photoglob Zürich, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



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A day in the Osteopath Clinic

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As we say farewell to '23 and look forward to 2024 and what it has to offer, we find ourselves in the midst of winter. The cold damp weather brings aching bones and joints. A great way to help relieve this is via acupuncture, be it Medical or Chinese. Below we explain the difference and why it's so highly regarded.

Acupuncture

What is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture is a treatment derived from ancient Chinese medicine. Fine needles are inserted at certain sites in the body for therapeutic or preventative purposes.

What is the difference between Medical & Chinese Acupuncture?

In simple terms, traditional Chinese acupuncture is based on the belief that it can restore the flow of Qi, the body's energy flow, whilst medical acupuncture, sometimes referred to as western medical acupuncture, uses anatomy and physiology and is based very much on relieving pain and muscle tensions. I also practice Electric acupuncture which I will cover in a separate article.

How does it work?

Western medical acupuncture (dry needling) is the use of acupuncture following a medical diagnosis. It involves stimulating sensory nerves under the skin and in the muscles. This results in the body producing natural substances, such as pain-relieving endorphins. It's likely

that these naturally released substances are responsible for the beneficial effects experienced with acupuncture.

Can I have Acupuncture alongside other treatment modalities?

In short, yes. If we imagine an Osteopath like a builder - in his tool belt he may have a hammer, screwdriver, drill etc... An Osteopath may have Acupuncture, spinal adjustments - manipulation, soft tissue techniques, kinesio taping etc. There is acupuncture of the thoracic spine no reason why in most cases it can't be used alongside other modalities.

Is it painful & are there any side effects?

It shouldn't ever be painful. You will obviously have an awareness of it as we are piercing a needle through the skin. However, if done correctly, the feeling should be awareness, not pain! Side effects are relatively minimal - bruising, and minor tenderness. The main contraindication to note is a patient on anti-coagulation drugs. For obvious reasons this would be approached with a degree of caution and assessed on a case-by-case scenario.

What are the main symptoms or conditions Acupuncture is used for?

It can be used to treat various conditions. However, the use of acupuncture is not always based on rigorous scientific evidence. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) provides guidelines for the NHS on the use of treatments and care of patients. These currently recommend acupuncture for:

Chronic pain, migraines, chronic tension-type headaches, various joint and muscle pains, jaw pain and, believe it or not, hiccups!



For more help or to book a consultation

Call 07749980096

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www.chris-tempest.com

Rich Nairn – The Artful Doodler



Born in 1975 in Kent, Rich has been drawing cartoons ever since his chubby baby fingers could first grasp a pen. He remembers being glued to the TV watching Warner Bros & Disney cartoons which led to an obsession which still exists to this very day.

Rich says: 'I attended art college in Canterbury but it soon became clear that I wasn't suited to a career in "proper art", where they chop cows in half or leave an untidy bed in an art gallery. No, I only wanted to draw silly pictures. After some time in the outside world I took the inky plunge and embarked on a career as a full-time cartoonist and caricaturist... and haven't looked back since.'

These days you'll find Rich at events across the UK, drawing caricatures. When he's not doing that he'll be at home with his wife Mai and daughter Skye. They probably won't know he's home as he will be hiding in the Doodle Cave creating cartoons and books full of weird and wonderful characters.

So how does Rich make a living? Simple. He is hired to draw caricatures of guests at weddings, parties and corporate events giving them a great memento and a lot of laughs in the process. He will be seen wandering around the guests drawing about 8 couples an hour in black & white, grey shaded drawings.

Rich also runs cartoon and caricature classes/workshops for all ages and tailored to your preferences across the South East. Or you can commission him to create your own caricatures of friends, family or work colleagues.

To find out more, see Rich's website **www.theartfuldoodler.co.uk** or go to his YouTube Channel where you'll see examples of his work, testimonials and prices. Or email **richnairn@hotmail.com** tel. **07958 039170**

Meanwhile, here's an example of a Rich cartoon. More to follow in future editions of Focus.



ALCOHOL & PAINKILERS

By Rich Nairn

EXTRA BIT

KAREN GOES TO A PARTY...

7PM

OH LOOK! IT'S A DRAWING*
MAN! I'LL GET ONE LATER.



8PM

OH, GIMME A CANOPY,*
I'M STARVING!



9PM

MY FAVE SONG! TO
THE DANCE FLOOR!



10PM

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?! I
'AINT DRUNK! POUR ME
ANOTHER ONE!!



11PM

LEAVING?! YOU
CAN'T GO! I'VE
BEEN WAITING
ALL NIGHT!!



January 2024 Anniversaries

Some notable anniversaries this month.....

50 years since New Year's Day was celebrated as a public holiday for the first time.



It's been **60 years** since Bob Dylan released the album 'The times They Are A-Changing.'

65 years since the foundation by Berry Gordy of the 'Motown' record label, in Detroit, USA – initially known as Tamla Records.

200 years since the birth of British novelist and playwright Wilkie Collins. Novels included 'The Woman in White' and 'The Moonstone', which is said to be the first British detective novel in modern times.



80 years since the death of Edvard Munch, the Norwegian artist best known for the painting 'The Scream'.



HOP PICKING IN KENT

A Talk by Sue Duckworth

Thursday January 25th

At 7.30h

Lenham Community Centre
Entry £4, Members free

Lenham Gardening Society

Our AGM was held in November as the last meeting for 2023. The committee agreed to stand again and was voted in en bloc.

2024 starts with our first meeting on Wednesday 18th January at 7.30pm in the Community Centre.

All are welcome to enjoy the evening, entry is £1. Membership is £7 per person and renewal is due at this meeting. Refreshments are served during the interval prior to the raffle.

Jane Scotchmer will be our speaker for the evening and her talk will be on Victorian Wonderlands of Craggs, Caves and Cascades.

The annual holiday will be to **Scarborough** in May. Outings this year will be on July 30th and September 24th details to be finalised later this month.



More information is available from Margaret Baines: tel: 431649 or via text on 07917401228 email: gardenlenham@gmail.com

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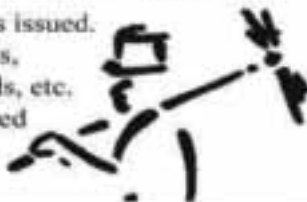
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Your seat at The View Restaurant awaits—reserve your place **£35 per person** for coach transport and a sumptuous 3-course lunch. Please pre-order option at the time of booking.

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The View Restaurant – Lunch Menu January 2024 [‘V’ = Vegetarian]

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- SECOND COURSE:** Chicken chasseur + seasonal veg; OR Beer battered Fish & chips + mushy peas; OR Mixed Bean Goulash + braised rice (V)
- DESERT:** Fruit Cobbler + clotted cream (V); OR Fruit Bavarios + Tuile biscuit; OR Chocolate Brownie + ice cream.

Put your name against one from each course, & return with booking form& payment.

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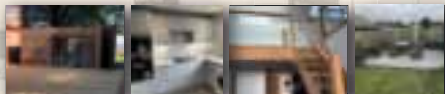
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Recipe of the Month

Carrot Cake

Ingredients:

225g (8oz) Self-raising flour

1tsp Cinnamon

1tsp Baking Powder

½ tsp Salt

225g (8oz) Grated Carrot

225g (8oz) Castor Sugar

4fl oz Oil

2 Eggs

60-120g (2-4oz) Chopped Nuts

Method:

Sift the flour, baking powder, cinnamon and salt into a bowl. Mix the oil and sugar. In a separate bowl beat the eggs. Mix the flour mixture with the oil mixture. Add the grated carrot and nuts. Put into an 8" tin and bake at 180 degrees (160 degrees fan) for about 1½ hours or until firm and a skewer comes out clean. When cold, top with cheese frosting if wished.



Cream Cheese Frosting:

60g (2 ¼ oz) Unsalted Butter (softened)

75g (2 ¾ oz) Icing Sugar

150g (5 ¼ oz) Full Fat Cream Cheese

¼ tsp Vanilla Extract

Put butter in a bowl and beat until smooth, sift in the icing sugar and continue beating until incorporated. Add the cream cheese and vanilla, continue beating until smooth, thick and even. Spread over the top of the cake once it has cooled.

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Pilgrims Way Artists

Get ready for another year of activities in the Tithe Barn in Lenham!
More on this in later editions of Focus, but meanwhile, here's a taster
for the next Pilgrims Way art exhibition, whose summer show is on
May 17th - May 27th with a craft fair on May 24th – 26th 2024.



Jane Flint



Alan Woollett



Daniel Harnet



Jane Ford



Janet Jackson



Jane Gibson

Climate Change is Happening

Pat Crawford provides the RURAL FOCUS PRESS GROUP COMMENT AND ADVICE COLUMN

According to the Daily Digest, thousands of scientists have signed a report warning that modern society could collapse this century owing to the dangers of human-driven Climate Change.

Although renewables have been recording huge growth around the world, the US Energy Information Administration predict global energy-related emissions will increase through to 2050 in line with population growth aligned to improving living standards that increase energy consumption. Recent massive wildfires in central Argentina were caused by an intense heatwave. Dozens of people were evacuated and nearly a thousand fire-fighters worked to combat the fires.

A drought in the Amazon, reported to be the worst recorded, left communities stranded without food, drinking water or fuel. Low water levels have been linked with mass deaths of river dolphins and fish. Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina have experienced 40C temperatures; scientists reported that the heatwave was probably due to the climate crisis. Associated Press reported that more than 14,000 people have been displaced in Myanmar as a result of particularly heavy monsoon rains.

Parts of the UK suffered flooding as a result of exceptionally heavy rain in October into November. Scotland was particularly badly affected; villages in South Yorkshire were flooded; County Durham and parts of Wales were also affected. Further south, Dorset, Devon, the Isle of Wight, Cornwall, Kent and Sussex also suffered.

The massive Dogger Bank Wind Farm has commenced generating power for the UK national grid. The world's largest offshore project, it is reported that a single turbine rotation can supply enough electricity to power a home for two days. Once the vast project is completed it will provide 5 per cent of the UK's electricity demands.

The International Monetary Fund and World Bank are investigating how to help African nations deal with the economic consequences of Climate Change. The continent is suffering erratic flooding, severe droughts, very high temperatures and other Climate Change-related problems. Vast numbers of UK farmers are implementing sustainable practices designed to benefit the environment and wildlife and they continue to maintain the highest livestock husbandry standards in the world – all the more reason to buy British.

Climate Change is adversely affecting wildlife around the world including here in the UK. Increasing numbers of UK gardeners are providing shelter for birds and small mammals by leaving entire hedges or parts of hedges uncut until the New Year while greater care is being taken to leave berries and seeds intact to provide food. With over 23 million gardens in the UK, the potential benefits could be huge.

According to Greenpeace, with more people wanting to grow their own fruit and vegetables, the UK has nearly 175,000 applications stuck on waiting lists for allotment plots.

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Christian Message

January 2024

From Rev'd John Huggins (01622-850280)

Blue January. The month when credit card bills start to be repaid. The month when the twinkling lights come down but the weather can be grim. The month when calls to the Samaritans go up.

Well, I hope this isn't you. But if it is you, take heart. Spring inevitably comes and the warmth of summer is on the way. The Bible entreats us to "cast our anxieties upon Him (the Lord) because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). That doesn't mean He will pay off our credit cards, but it does mean that God knows us (Psalm 139) and stands with us.

The whole message of Christmas is that God, incredibly, came to us! God is for us. God is on our side. As we align ourselves to His will, God fights for us and is alongside us.

In the church in Boughton Malherbe, we are going to start sessions that are a guided space for reflection, for stillness, for withdrawing (at least for an hour) from everyday conflict, and for rediscovering peace and inner strength. (On the first Saturday of each month at 2 pm.) Part

of the reason is that I have become very aware of how many people are struggling in these post-Covid days with busyness and stress and anxiety. Absolutely everybody who wants to come is welcome to these. You don't need to be a churchgoer. You don't need to come regularly. You don't need to share anything with anybody else.

People seem to assume that meditation is the stuff of Buddhists and so on, but actually there's a massively strong Christian tradition for reflective stillness. The early Christians sometimes went out into the desert and lived their lives there, sometimes sharing their wisdom with others who came to them. Jesus himself spent 40 days in the wilderness as he started his ministry. And modern neuroscience (look at the work of Iain McGilchrist) points to the need for more open and abstract thinking for mental flourishing.

So take heart. Blue January? The sun is on the way! The light of Christ be with you.

Len Valley Benefice

Everybody is welcome

'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches' *Matthew 13:31-32*

Wednesday 3 January

9.30am Lenham: Morning Worship

Sunday 7 January

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Holy Communion

Sunday 14 January

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Holy Communion

Sunday 21 January

8.00am Lenham: Holy Communion (BCP)

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Morning Worship

Sunday 28 January

10.30am Benefice Holy Communion at St John's, Harrietsham 'God and God's Kingdom'

Check notice boards nearer the time.



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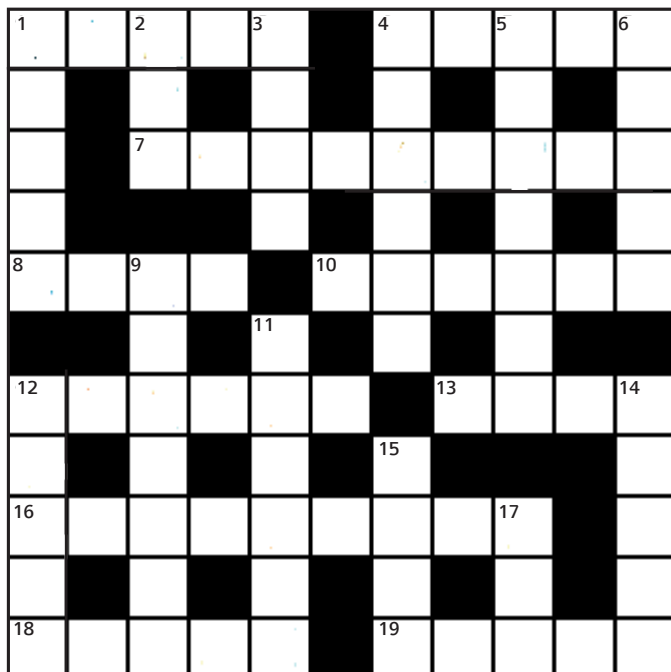


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Focus PRIZE Crossword January 2024

The November winner was Jenny Fairhall of Lenham – well done!



Answers for December
2023 Focus Crossword



Across clues

1. Male cows. (5)
4. Babies small sleeping cots. (5)
7. A colourful bird seen on feeders. It has red on its head. (9)
8. What a chimneysweep gets rid of. (4)
10. Pointed piece on what you are writing with. (3,3)
12. A nickname for a piano. (6)
13. A brand of petrol. (4)
16. Something that makes things look bigger. (9)
18. A name often used rather than Susan. (5)
19. Make a car change direction. (5)

Down clues

1. They sit on top of cricket stumps. (5)
2. You burn it on a fire indoors. (3)
3. It is used to flavour food. (4)
4. Such as espresso. (6)
5. When someone is batting in cricket they are playing one. (7)
6. Polite Indian title for a man. (5)
9. Fruit used to make marmalade. (7)
11. Ask someone to meet you. (6)
12. Vet Herriot's first name. (5)
14. Command. (5)
15. A title for an unmarried lady/girl. (4)

A £10 voucher, donated by your crossword compiler, will go to the first correctly completed crossword picked from your entries. Please complete the box below and hand your entry into Lenham Parish Council office at 1A High Street or Lenham library **no later than 20 January** where they'll be placed in an envelope. The winner will be notified direct and announced in a future issue of *Focus*.

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