THIS ISSUE

- A LION FOR A CHRISTMAS PRESENT?
- GEORGE FARMER PROFILED
- TATSFIELD TENNIS STAR
- ST MARY’S CHRISTMAS SERVICES
- NDS CONCERT SUCCESS

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Parish Council website www.surreycommunity.info/tatsfield • email tatsfieldpc@talk21.com
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MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS
We welcome contributions from village organisations and individual residents but reserve all editorial
rights. Copy date for the Magazine is 16th of the preceding month. Contributions should be sent
directly to the Editor at The Briars, Ninehams Road, Tatsfield, TN16 2AN (Fax: 01959 577357
Email: bob@bobdavid.co.uk) or drop it into Linda’s Stores.

Small Ads These are only accepted from Tatsfield or Titsey residents (No Trade) and are free (Max
10 words plus phone No.) We will include them in the next issue space permitting.

Calendar Dates Our rolling Calendar usually covers 6 weeks from publication so please give us your
dates in good time. If you don’t want your event to clash with others why not check with us early.

Ideas/Opinions/Articles We are always looking for items of interest - have a word with the Editor.

Correspondence We welcome letters commenting on items in previous issues or on anything else.
Please state if not for publication.

Advertisements We take no responsibility for the goods and services advertised in the Magazine.
Dear All,

What does Christmas mean to you? Do you immerse yourself in frantic preparations? Is Christmas shopping something you look forward to each year or is it a looming dread? Do you treasure time spent with families or fear the isolation of being alone?

Our feelings and experiences of this festive season are varied. Some love the busy shops, the dazzling lights, the exciting parties, the festive music whilst others are wearied by frenzied preparations and long for some quiet and calm. For some it is a painful and difficult time of year, for others it is their favourite time. Wherever you are on the spectrum I would like to encourage you to pause a moment and ask yourself what Christmas means for you.

When I was in America recently, the shops were filled with Christmas decorations. I was amused to see a whole range including tea towels, plates, cushions, tree decorations and more with the statement (in exceedingly large letters!) “Jesus is the reason for the Season”. Whilst this range wasn’t my cup of tea, and I refrained from buying anything, I couldn’t help being struck by the simplicity of the statement.

On one level I suspect we would all agree with that statement. Christmas is the time when the church celebrates the birth of Christ. The carols we sing remind us of the Christmas story. But what does it really mean to us? Is it just a nostalgic story? Do we believe that Jesus is the reason for the season and if so what difference does that make?

I believe that Christmas is far more than a nostalgic story. I believe in a God who loves us more than we will ever fully comprehend. I believe in a God who chose to become human and live among us. I believe in a God who longs for us to know his peace and presence in the midst of our lives; in the midst of the business, stress, anxiety, uncertainty, loneliness, and joy, in the midst of all we are and in the midst of all that is.

There are many ways in which we might experience the presence and peace of God in our lives. So often we see God’s love reflected in the love and kindness of others. One way we might reflect God’s love is by being sensitive to others whose feelings about Christmas may be very different from our own. Whatever Christmas holds for you this year, I pray that you would know the love and peace of God in the midst of it all.

There are a variety of Christmas services at St Mary’s and you are very welcome to join us at any of them. Details are printed in the Christmas card inside this magazine and in the calendar. If you are unwell or unable to get to church but would like to receive Holy Communion over the Christmas period, or indeed at any other time, do contact us and we can arrange a visit or home communion service. Wishing you a very joyous Christmas from all at St Mary’s.

Revd Louise Ellis
Dear Editor,

Blooming Marvellous

Belatedly, but no less sincerely, I wish to applaud Ann Lovelace on her delightful poem ‘Blooming Marvellous’ featured in the October magazine.

Every sentiment expressed and observation made must surely have been echoed in the minds and hearts of all of us who live in this place. Thank you Ann.

Betty Perry, Paynesfield Road

Dear Editor,

Fly Tipping

My litter picking pitch down the unmade part of Paynesfield Road has been suffering a spate of rubbish dumping of late. First it was a load of tyres, which I must say Tandridge Council responded to extremely quickly and cleared but now it’s a load of garden waste. Because in the main this last episode consists of leaves it seems wrong to prevail upon Tandridge yet again. However, it does contain other rubbish. This over a period of time will be removed but I would be interested to hear from anybody who may have recently employed somebody to clear their garden and recognises any of the following items which were also discarded:

- Apples, pink plastic watering can, hanging baskets, hose pipe,
- broken ceramic and plastic flower pots, CDs, building materials and
- a large blue/green plastic sheet - may be a tent or something similar.

Many dedicated people work hard to keep our village attractive, so am I really being that vindictive when I say I would dearly love to feed the name of the person responsible to the Council? My email address is howard.aylett1@btinternet.com.

Whilst on the subject of my litter picking pitch, I have noticed an improvement in the number of used dog poo bags discarded into the hedgerow but disappointingly, it
Still happens. As I said in an earlier article I am not averse to raking out the occasional suspicious package but am at a loss to know why anybody who diligently packages their dog’s poo would then chuck it into a hedge or indeed suspend it from a gate or fence like some form of trophy! I do wonder if this is personal and an overt challenge to my litter picking authority and whether it is now necessary to reinstate the PPP (Poo Package Patrol). When attempted before it raised such a stink I had to wash my hands of it - boom, boom!

Howard Aylett, Paynesfield Road

Editor: In his letter below, Nigel Shaw questions the need to spend a large amount of money on refurbishing the Westmore Green play area and asks for an explanation. Tandridge have given a full response in the note which follows Nigel’s letter. Readers will also find more in Village News about the efforts of PARROT, the fundraising group, and their request for villagers’ support.

Dear Editor,

Westmore Green Play Area

I’ve worked with the children of Tatsfield for a large part of my life, so please don’t think I’m being negative or obstructive when I pose the following question: Why do we see the need to ‘refurbish’ the Westmore Green play area at a cost of £50,000? I gave it a look-over the other day and could see nothing wrong with it. Sure, it needs ‘renovating’, i.e. a bare wood and metal repaint, renewal of the ‘soft’ surfacing’, but structurally it seems fine. In fact, it obviously is fine (fit for purpose) otherwise it would have been condemned and closed as a health and safety measure. That hasn’t happened, which supports my theory that the ‘problem’ with the play area is simply cosmetic. In fact, walking home, I met a young Mum and asked for her opinion. Unsurprisingly, she told me that both she and her husband had the same thought; what’s wrong with the play equipment we already have? Play equipment doesn’t go out of date, it just gets tired looking. I would be more than willing to join a party of interested people to help carry out the renovation work. This should enable the PARROT organisers to knock two zeroes off their estimated costs. Who knows, someone may even offer to donate the materials – cost zero pounds! Who thought it needed a £50,000 refurbishment in the first place? A play area refurbisher? Let’s get real. By all means raise the proposed village share of the cost (£25,000), but let’s not spend it on unnecessary work. Surely there are better ways in which the money could be spent, and by which the village’s youngsters would benefit? Of course, there may be factors that I (and others) know nothing of but which would clarify the need. In this case, please make them known. In my experience, the more informed people are, the more willing they become to lend their support to community effort

Nigel Shaw, Greenway
Tandridge Response to Nigel Shaw’s Letter

Tandridge District Council owns and maintains 37 play areas across the District. In 2008 a capital programme was put in place to refurbish or rebuild the sites that have reached their expected end of life.

The play area on Westmore Green was originally installed in 1985 and is now over 25 years old and overdue for a rebuild. The reason behind a complete rebuild is that several items within are no longer manufactured and spare parts are no longer available, making it extremely inefficient to maintain. There are also a number of design defects that lie within some of the equipment that now no longer meet the European safety standards and these items would have to be removed in due course.

Tandridge District Council has obtained quotes and designs from 3 of the leading playground manufacturers who were given a brief of providing a sustainable, modern and enjoyable play provision that would last another 25 years. The quotes came in with only a small amount separating them with the cheapest at £47,000 and the most expensive at £49,000, and these have been used as the benchmark for the funds to be raised between the Council and PARROT.

The provision, installation and maintenance of children’s play areas is a specialist subject that requires an understanding of the health and safety requirements and the standards within them that protect, but also encourage, children to develop risk and development of play within their interaction with other children.

Every child has the right to play and every child matters and because of this we have a responsibility to provide a lasting legacy that children will continue to use and enjoy for years to come.

The Council and PARROT are looking to build a site that will be sustainable and cost effective to maintain in this uncertain future we find ourselves in and we have to look ahead towards a bigger picture that will ensure future generations will benefit from what will be a fantastic play provision to be envied by other communities.

Steve Hyder, Contracts and Services Officer, Parks and Open Spaces, Tandridge District Council

COVER

The picture on this month’s cover is of the scene outside the Ship last year during the Carol Singalong, with the Tatsfield Singers being led by Alex Deterding. There were several inches of snow on the ground and it was bitterly cold. You’ll find the details of this year’s Carol Singalong in Village News. Let’s hope we have another big crowd joining in - and that the weather is kinder!
COUNCIL REPORTS

TATSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Our November meeting was preceded by the bi-monthly Police Forum. We heard a preliminary report on the monitoring of traffic in Approach Road and we discussed options on speed reduction. The number of questions asked meant that discussions had to continue in a separate room.

Members reporting to the meeting included Doug Massey on highways including his site meetings with SCC officers, progress with road repairs, the filling of the salt bins around the village and arrangements for dealing with winter snow emergencies. Then Sue Smale reported progress on the affordable homes project and our hope for positive news early in the New Year.

We discussed the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebration weekend of 2-5 June next year and there will be a meeting in the WI Hall on 11 January. Other projects for 2012 include a traffic census and a possible new Village Appraisal; more on these topics at our meeting on 12 December. All are welcome to attend.

Dave Bishop confirmed the arrangements for the Carol Sing-along in front of the Old Ship on Friday 16 December and we also heard from Phil Clark, the Tatsfield Community Responders Coordinator. He described current problems with communications that have meant the Responders not getting the information needed for them to respond to local emergencies. Phil will be attending an important meeting soon and will have a further report for the December meeting.

The PARROT fund raising group for refurbishing the Westmore Green play area reported on their latest fund raising activities and their plans for 2012.

On behalf of the Parish Council I wish everyone a Happy Christmas and the very best for 2012.

Jon Allbutt, Chairman (Tel: 576481; Email: jon@jonallbutt.co.uk)

The next Parish Council meeting will be held at the Aileen McHugo Building at 7.30 pm on Monday 12th December

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Refuse and recycling services: I reported last month on Tandridge’s review of its refuse and recycling services. I have since attended the Community Services Committee’s meeting to consider future plans. The 14 year contract with Biffa has a review clause which gives the opportunity to make changes next October. Tandridge’s recycling performance is the worst in Surrey. We are the only council in Surrey that still collects refuse weekly; we have to find
substantial savings as a result of reductions in Government funding; and a recent survey showed that most Tandridge households favour increasing recycling and reducing waste sent to landfill. So the Committee has recommended that the service from next October should consist of the collection of
- food waste from a container once a week
- mixed recycling from a wheeled bin once a fortnight, and
- refuse once a fortnight.

This will save the council almost £1m a year. It should also increase the amount recycled and reduce material sent to landfill. The most controversial aspect is the move to fortnightly collection of refuse but I hope weekly collection of food waste will take away people’s concerns about health and hygiene hazards. Tandridge will finally decide at a full council meeting in January. There is a lot of detail to discuss. I must say that my instinctive reaction was to oppose the ending of weekly refuse collections but I am less sure about it now. What do you think?

Cllr Bob David (Tel: 577357 Email: bob@bobdavid.co.uk)

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

Winter Maintenance Plans at SCC: I am writing these notes on a sunny November afternoon and wonder what snow actually is! Last year we had one of the worst early December snowfalls which stretched all resources at SCC. Many people abandoned their cars and walked home.... yes, I also had to walk from Purley as buses could not go much further! One of the real problems last year was that so many cars were abandoned that snowploughs could not clear the roads in the days afterwards.

When SCC changed Highway contractors last April, part of the savings package resulted in finding an extra £700,000 annually to extend the snow gritting routes. Today, all grit bins are now reported as filled and SCC is ready. It is important that everyone plays their part and I recognise what an outstanding service was provided by so many residents in Tatsfield last year and great credit goes to Parish Council Chairman Jon Allbutt and everyone who responded to the call for support to take the elderly etc shopping. That is what the ‘Big Society’ is all about – but Tatsfield residents have always been a part of the ‘Big Society’.

Highway Works: Parish Councillor Doug Massey is following Sandy Philibert in doing an excellent job looking after the highways etc in Tatsfield and I am very grateful for his support.

Happy Christmas and I hope a snow free one!

Cllr David Hodge (Tel: 020 8541 8003 Email: david.hodge@surreycc.gov.uk)
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CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR
OPENING TIMES

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<tr>
<th>December</th>
<th>Greengrocers</th>
<th>Linda’s Stores</th>
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WANTED – WICKER BASKETS

Does anyone have any wicker baskets they don’t need, which hopefully are clean and in good condition and not too big? If so, could you please drop them into me at 25 Paynesfield Road or call me on 577596. Anne Chapman.
ALLOTMENT NEWS

A very quiet month, as November usually is in the garden. Work has started on construction of the composting area and the hardy volunteers have made good progress and completion is on schedule. Allotmenteers are now able to put their green waste straight into the bins in a jiffy. But this has taken an enormous amount of time so not much progress in other areas.

We now have a weekly delivery of fresh manure for plotters to use and this will reap benefits next spring – gardening is always about looking to the future! But we are still picking courgettes and lettuces – amazing in mid November! Our own potato, carrot, onion and beetroot stores are still ongoing – should last us until Christmas and have already saved us a fortune! I am sure most other plotters have also reaped these rich rewards.

We are considering all quotations submitted for the fencing project and all the contenders have been asked to re-visit the site in order that their specifications are equal, allowing us to make a fair judgement. This is taking quite some time, but we know it is important to get this major work absolutely correct.

The tenancy agreements have now been signed between Whelan Farms and the Parish Council and subsequently, the Horticultural Society with the Parish Council, thereby securing our tenancy for the next 25 years. Plenty of digging yet to come!

Sadly, we have had more problems with theft - 4 water containers were stolen, but more worryingly, the thieves cut the water pipes to free them. Fortunately, we had cut off the water supply as it is now winter with plenty of rain - otherwise we would have flooded half of Tatsfield and been lumbered with a massive water bill. They returned later that week for another attempt, but seem to have been disturbed as nothing was taken. The police have been informed and have upped their security patrols, for which we are very grateful.

Liz Armitage

VETS FOOTBALL

We made a good start to our Vets Football sessions in the Village Hall last month. We are there from 6.30 to 7.30 pm on Thursdays. Like to join in? Just come along or give me a ring first if you wish. Non-marking trainers to be worn please.

John White (Tel: 570097)
LITTER, LITTER, NOWHERE!!!

Okay, I’m fantasising a bit; there’s always some of the horrible stuff around, but I just wanted to say how great the village has looked this year. Thanks to all our gallant litter-pickers from the Litter Initiative, the Saturday Morning Team, the South East in Bloom team and the intrepid ‘Independents’, our village has never looked tidier.

I walk up and down Westmore Road most days and I can’t believe the transformation. It used to be strewn with litter, dirty, grubby litter that had been around for weeks. Now if there is anything it is something that has been recently dropped (please don’t do it) and, personally, I’m much more likely to pick it up on my way past and drop it in a bin. I’ve seen others do the same.

My most recent ‘Initiative’ volunteer asked for an extra litter-picker so that a young member of the family could join in. What a great idea! If anyone else would like extra pickers just let me know – they’re as cheap as chips. Likewise, if a picker is not working efficiently just ask for a replacement.

It just remains for me to wish you all a very merry Christmas, health and happiness in the New Year and to say that we are always looking for new volunteers, so if you are interested please contact me at an address below. It’s a great way to burn off that Christmas Pud’.

Philip Brett
E:mail: hollygrove6-litter@yahoo.co.uk
Letterbox: 6 Grove Road, TN16 2BB

TATTY KNITTERS

A Christmas get together with mince pies and mulled wine will be on Tuesday 13 December at the WI Hall, Paynesfield Road, from 7.30 to 9.30 pm. Just £2. Happy Christmas.

Val Quick (Tel: 576264)

GOOD HOME WANTED FOR ‘MINI’

FILM NIGHTS IN TATSFIELD

Looking back over the year a lot of the films we’ve shown have been requested, with a few wild cards thrown in to make up the mix. Our aim has been to cover as wide a variety and genre of film as possible. This gives plenty of opportunity for reaction and lively discussion!

Many thanks to all those who’ve supported us over the year. We look forward to getting more film requests and welcoming you to the next Film Night on Thursday 25th January.

Happy New Year!

Wendy Harvey (Tel: 562340) and Elaine Webster (Tel: 577753)

LOCAL POLICE NEWS

Firstly I would like to introduce myself. My name is Matthew Nottidge and I will be one of your local Police Community Support Officers. As part of my role I will be regularly patrolling the village. It is my role to help address any issues or concerns you may have, so I welcome you to stop me whilst I am out and about on patrol in your neighbourhood.

Over the past weeks we have seen a number of thefts and burglaries around the village. I would like to remind you all to make your property as secure as possible and not to hesitate in reporting any suspicious activity.

A speed detection device was in place on Approach Road measuring vehicle speeds over the past weeks. The results show the vast majority of speeds fell well under the 60 mph speed limit. Research will continue looking into the suitability of the speed limit on that stretch of road.

I would like to wish you all a very happy and safe festive period.

Matthew Nottidge, PCSO 14681

PHOTOCOPIER GOING FREE TO A VILLAGE ORGANISATION

An A3 photocopier is available free to any village organisation. It has been checked and will copy ok. The A3 paper tray will not fit for some reason, but that doesn’t stop copying from the platen. Please ring Jon Allbutt on 576481.
TATSFIELD-VERN d’ANJOU ASSOCIATION UPDATE

In this December magazine you’ll find our advert for our great value New Year’s Eve party. With a lively disco and a licensed bar until 12.30 am, it’s a super way to celebrate the New Year with friends and family in a terrific local venue. Also in the magazine you’ll find our taster advert for our town twinning trip to Vern d’Anjou over Easter next year. It really is an unforgettable experience and comes highly recommended by all who have travelled to France over the last 37 years since Tatsfield’s twinning with this marvellous little French town. Tickets for both events are always popular, so if you’d like to reserve your place or have any questions please give me a call.

Peter Fuller, Chairman (Tel: 573554)

VERN QUIZ NIGHT

Eleven village teams and over 90 people enjoyed a great quiz night at the Village Hall on 19th November. With quiz rounds as varied as British Royals, the Americas and Notable Women as well as the usual General Knowledge, teams really got stuck into the challenge. Added to that were picture rounds including guessing the pasta plus live music rounds of guitar and piano music. There was even a ‘senses’ round where teams had to guess the flavour of a variety of crisps and the identity of several mystery ‘white powders’! Teams really appreciated the variety of rounds on offer.

The evening had two themes – it was the first Saturday after the latest crop of Beaujolais Nouveau had been released so each table tucked into the new offering – it seemed to go down well as all stocks were exhausted rapidly. Baked camembert plus a lovely French apple tart provided the sustenance. The second theme was around the twinning activities of the Vern Association. All funds raised will go towards the trip to Vern next Easter plus the next visit of our French friends in 2013.

Many village clubs joined in the battle including teams from choir, badminton, table tennis, food and wine and art societies. In the end it was a team made up of the Watts, Harber, Deterding and Dymoke families who just pipped the art and badminton clubs for the coveted champions spot.

A great night had by all. Thank you to all the committee who worked tirelessly as ever and to all the villagers who made the evening a success by entering into the Vern spirit!

Peter Fuller
The time now seems to be flying and Christmas is approaching incredibly fast! We have had some lovely things to celebrate recently, including Halloween and Bonfire Night, which the children said they enjoyed very much! They also had a great time making their firework pictures, getting into quite a mess whilst doing them, which is what it’s all about!

So far this month, we have had a very popular ‘cooking week’ where the children made pizzas, iced biscuits, fruit smoothies and rice crispy cakes – most of which I think were eaten before they even made it home! They also made poppies on Armistice Day and had a 30-second silence which they all observed perfectly and beautifully. Next week we will be celebrating Thanksgiving, and after that it will be Christmas all the way through, finishing up with our Christmas sing-a-long and party at the end of term.

As some of the parents may be aware, we have recently introduced a ‘rolling snack time’ as advised by Ofsted. This basically means that your child is now able to choose when they would like to eat their snack, between 10.15 am and 11.15 am. We are giving this a go on a trial basis to see how it works out, so if you have any comments or thoughts on how this is going or what your child thinks of it, please let Jackie know.

We are also in the process of launching a Facebook page for Little Acorns parents only, where we can keep you informed of forthcoming events, put up reminders and just generally communicate with you. This is being worked on at the moment and, again, if you have thoughts on what you would like to see on the page please let Jackie know.

If you would like to register your children with Little Acorns for either our morning sessions (3 – 4 year olds) or our afternoon sessions (2 – 3 year olds) please contact Julie Barlow on 541103.

Helen Hartley, Vice-Chair, on behalf of Little Acorns Pre-School (Tel: 576871)
SHOPPING FOR CHRISTMAS

Every £1 you spend has an impact on the economy; it sends a signal to producers, suppliers and retailers. At Christmas it seems especially appropriate to remember all the people involved in bringing the food, clothes, presents and toys to you. Can you be sure that no-one was exploited by low wages or excessive working hours in making the gifts that you are selecting or the food you will be eating?

The Fairtrade logo is a reassuring sign ensuring that producers in developing countries growing cotton, tea, chocolate and sugar get a fair deal. It is not a charity, but simply a way of enabling hard working people across the world to earn a living wage for themselves, without handouts. Sometimes prices seem more expensive, but not always.

There are a number of shops locally that supply Fairtrade products including:
Strawberry Fields in Oxted
The Cotton Store in Hayes
Oxted Health Foods in Oxted
Traidcraft food/crafts at St Mary’s Church on the second Sunday of each month
ALL local supermarkets – an ever growing range of foods/drinks

There are also many websites which offer Fairtrade products including:
Ethical gifts, clothes and groceries www.naturalcollection.com
Oxfam and Traidcraft www.fairtradeonline.com
For fabrics/clothes www.bishopstontrading.co.uk
People Tree; eco-friendly fashion and handicrafts www.ptree.co.uk
Crafts and stationery www.sharedearth.co.uk

I am sure a Google search for Fairtrade goods will offer you even more choice! We look forward to welcoming you at future Fairtrade village events in 2012, including a Chocolatey Fairtrade Fortnight Event in February!

Hilary Harber, Tatsfield Fairtrade Group

CRAFT FAIR

It was another successful day at the annual Tatsfield Craft Fair arranged by Enid Garrard at the Village Hall on Sunday 20 November, with more than 30 stalls offering a wide range of goods. The Food and Wine Society’s refreshments also went down well. Apologies from Lin Saines, who was not able to provide her stall of pickles, chutneys and herbs because she was unwell on the day.
TATSFIELD HELPLINE AGM

At the Helpline’s AGM last month, it was reported that the Helpline was in a sound and healthy position. Requests totalling 87 for lifts to hospitals, surgeries and other appointments had been met and no request had been turned down. The lifts had been provided by 18 volunteer drivers. The officers – Angela Sawyers (Chairman), Hazel Cartwright (Secretary) and Paddy Clarke (Treasurer) - were re-elected for another year. Sylvia Waters continues as Co-Ordinator.

The Helpline always welcomes new drivers. Anyone interested should phone Sylvia Waters on 577524 for further information.

It was said at the AGM that some villagers, amazingly, had been heard to say that they did not know the Helpline and its services existed. The purpose of the Helpline is to provide transport for anyone in the village who has difficulty in getting to hospitals and surgeries, etc. A donation for journeys is requested, based on the number of miles travelled, to help cover driver’s petrol and administrative costs. All anyone needs to do is to contact Sylvia in good time with details of appointments, etc. If you know of anyone who might benefit from the Helpline’s services, please tell them about the Helpline.

TATSFIELD IN BLOOM PROGRAMME

There were a lot of tears last month when the willow mother, daughter, son and dog disappeared from the Bakery green. They had been a fine sight for two years but sadly the time had come for them to move on. The open auction for them was won by Knights Garden Centre at Woldingham (one of our sponsors for many years); we shall keep an eye open to see what they make of them.

The rest of the structures on the Bakery green were removed last month as well and all the bare areas were re-turfed, with a new bed being dug out in preparation for next year’s display. Meanwhile, the bed will be planted with daffodils, which should provide a nice splash of colour next spring.

The In Bloom team continue to plan the displays for next year and at the same time carry on with the regular work of keeping the village clean and tidy. Anyone who would like to help – no special skills are needed – should contact our volunteers co-ordinator, Angela Sawyers, on 577434.

Jon Allbutt (Tel: 576481) and Bob David (Tel: 577357)
THE QUEEN’S DIAMOND JUBILEE 2-5 JUNE 2012: VILLAGE CELEBRATIONS

Coming with this magazine is a questionnaire from the Parish Council seeking villagers’ views on how they would like the Jubilee celebrated in the village. This follows two public meetings last month. Please spend a few minutes to complete and return the questionnaire. There will be another meeting on Wednesday 11 January at 7.30 pm in the WI Hall, when the Parish Council hope that as many village organisations and villagers will come along to share ideas about how we should celebrate the Jubilee.

MAGAZINE MATTERS

Inserts: There are two inserts with this month’s magazine: a card with details of the Christmas services at St. Mary’s and a questionnaire from the Parish Council about village celebrations of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee next year.

Next issue: Contributions for the January magazine should be with the editor by 16 December. The magazine should be delivered to you from Friday 30 December onwards.

Magazine crossword: There were several entries of the November crossword, but sadly no correct ones. A couple of the clues proved to be especially difficult! There is another cryptic crossword on page 67. Going to give it a try?

Magazine Christmas Party: All those involved in producing and distributing the magazine should have received their invitations to the party at the WI Hall on Monday 5 December at 8 pm.

TATSFIELD SINGERS

The choir have a busy Christmas: they will be singing at a meeting of the Biggin Hill Society in the evening on 1 December, then at the Carol Singalong outside the Old Ship at 7 pm on Friday 16 December and finally at the Carol Service at St. Mary’s Church on Sunday 18 December at 4.30 pm.

The choir meet in Tatsfield School hall on Thursdays at 7.45 pm. Would you like to join them? You would be very welcome. Just have a word with Pat Coombe on 577863 or Dawn Forrester-Groom on 577585.
‘TELL US ONCE’

A new service that will make it easier to share information about a death was launched last month.

Losing a loved one is hard enough without the stress of paperwork and making phone calls. Tell Us Once aims to ease this burden by allowing you to tell multiple government agencies about a death at the same time.

The service is being offered to all residents when they make a booking to register a death with their local registrar and the updated information will be shared with organisations such as the Department for Work and Pensions, Identity and Passport Service, the DVLA, council tax and even libraries.

The service has been developed by the Department for Work and Pensions and is being used by Surrey County Council in partnership with the 11 District and Borough councils in Surrey. For more information about registering a death and the Tell Us Once service, please visit www.surreycc.gov.uk/registeringadeath or phone 0300 200 1002
“TATSFIELD SCHOOL PAST AND PRESENT”

*The book that tells you all about the school, its staff and its pupils

*Full history of the school back to the 1840s right up to the move to its new site

*A good Christmas present for yourself and your family?

NORMAL PRICE £8.50
SPECIAL PRICE IN DECEMBER - £5!

Available at Linda’s Stores
Published by the Tatsfield History Project

BEWARE COLD CALLERS WHO CLAIM YOUR COMPUTER HAS A VIRUS

This is a repeat of a warning about a costly scam. It usually starts in the same way. The phone rings and the caller – usually with a foreign accent – asks for the householder, quoting their name and address before saying "I'm calling for Microsoft. We've had a report from your Internet Service Provider of serious virus problems from your computer." Dire forecasts are made that, if the problem is not solved, the computer will become unusable.

The computer owner is directed to a website and told to download a programme that hands over remote control of the computer, and the caller "installs" various "fixes" for the problem. And then it's time to pay a fee: £100 - £200 for a "subscription" to the "preventative service". The only catch: there was never anything wrong with the computer, the caller is not working for Microsoft or the Internet Service Provider, and the owner has given a complete stranger access to every piece of data on their machine.

Beware! If you receive one of these calls do not follow their instructions. Just inform them you will get your IT department to call them back, if they provide a number and that you would be more than happy to do this! But no number will be provided.

Tom Chorley (Tel: 577794) Thanks are due to Trevor Sykes for this information.
Dear Residents,

TATSFIELD PLAYGROUND IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE VILLAGE. As you may or may not be aware, the equipment in the children’s playground on Westmore Green is starting to show signs of wear and tear and is becoming unsafe. As this equipment starts to break or become unsafe it will be removed by Tandridge Council never to be replaced. The seesaw is already evidence of this. Consequently, this leaves the children of the village without a playground to go to and forces the parents to go to surrounding areas.

To counteract this problem a fundraising appeal called PARROT has been formed by local residents and Tatsfield School parents. We have set ourselves a target of £25,000 and the reason for this amount is that Tandridge Council have agreed to match anything we raise up to £25,000 by 1 April 2012.

We are starting the ball rolling by having a Halloween Party for the children on Sunday 30 October at 4.30 pm in the Village Hall. In addition to this Joe Greenhill of Park Wood Golf Club gave us £50 from their raffle and Park Wood Golf Club has kindly agreed to donate money to the fund from future raffles held, so thank you Joe and Park Wood Golf Club.

But it’s you the residents of Tatsfield that we are seeking help from. We have worked out that if each household could possibly donate the equivalent of £5 per month for five months (£25) then we would raise over £17,000 towards the £25,000 figure we are trying to achieve.

I know times are very hard at the moment for people so whatever you could spare would be gratefully received and if you can give more then please do. Please remember that we are talking about providing somewhere safe to play for existing children of Tatsfield and future generations.

All donations can be handed into Linda’s Stores. If you donate by cheque please could you make the cheques payable to ‘PARROT’ and any cash donations to be placed in an envelope with PARROT written on the front and given into to Linda’s Stores. You can also hand any donations to any of the fundraising team: Vicky Cooling, Lisa Stokoe, Kevin ‘Arnie’ Arnold, Sarah Turrell and Tara Jones.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this appeal and please, please remember that THIS IS FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE VILLAGE.

Kevin (Arnie) Arnold – Chair of Little Acorns Pre-School
PARROT UPDATE

Parrot has had its first fundraising event, held on Sunday, 30th October which was a Halloween Party for the children. We had over 120 children attend and they had a wonderful time. The event raised £750 in total, so a big thank you to all those who were involved and helped us out.

The Badminton Club kindly agreed to donate half the proceeds from their 24 hour Badminton Marathon to Parrot. This resulted in a donation of just over £1,000, so thank you the Badminton Club.

We have had a few donations into Linda’s Store, which we are grateful for but we do need more support from residents to help us to reach our target.

To date we have raised a total of £1,942.40. Just £23,057.60 to go!

The next fundraising event is a Quiz Night on Saturday 3rd December at Tatsfield Village Hall with tickets priced at £5 each. For more information and tickets please contact Liz Kelleher on 07846 126565.

Parrot would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people and organisations for their help and support so far:

- Hits Disco
- Bounce Away
- Phoenix Cards (Anne Chapman)
- Park Wood Golf Club
- Tatsfield Badminton Club
- Debbie and Andrews Sausages

Thanks for taking the time to read the letter on the opposite page (which is repeated from last month, in case you missed it) and this update.

Don’t forget - any donations can be given into Linda’s Stores.

Many thanks

The Parrot Team

LEAF AND SNOW CLEARING

Let me come and clear away your leaves, I have my own blower, rake, and barrow. And when the snow comes I can clear that for you too!

My name is Harvey and I live in Johns Road.

You can contact me on 570097 or 07758 839329 My services are £10 per hour.
NEWS FROM LONGBRIDGE

Editor: Jeff Bloxham, professional motorsport photographer who lived in Cross-ways until he moved away earlier this year, bumped into Colin Corke, our former Parish Priest, at the Classic Car Show at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham last month. Colin, now the Vicar at Longbridge, has sent the latest news from there. The picture, taken by Jeff, is of Colin and his Allegro at the NEC.

It was a pleasant surprise to see Jeff Bloxham at the NEC Classic Car Show. I had read of his family's move to Staffordshire. As ever in a matter of moments he took several excellent images of our display. This year's Allegro was restored with the help of Jonnie Panther and his late father John senior in the mid 1990s during my time as Priest in Charge of St Mary's.

It has been sad recently to read of so many moves and deaths of people who were so prominent during my time in the village - Luis de la Torre, the Ugos, Tony Irving and so many more. It is also interesting to drive into the village every now and again and see all the changes - proper road edges by the church which is now in a much less 'rustic old farm' setting, the new school, and so much more.

Here in Longbridge things are moving on six and a half years since MG Rover collapsed in April 2005. We have an architecturally dramatic (opinions are divided there!) £66 million further education college (Bournville College) which opened for the new academic year, a £5 million youth centre for South West Birmingham and a Sainsbury’s supermarket all coming to the ‘new heart for Longbridge’. Meanwhile
the Chinese finally assemble a few MG6 cars in the hundred or so acres of factory and offices they still rent. Longbridge is changing fast with new roads, new houses and new facilities alongside the parish, which is still a largely white working class outer estate.

Excitingly, a member of one of the local churches has become Chaplain to the construction site. Stephen is not ordained and his paid work is in the area of construction but he gives a day a week to this work – and all the local churches are getting together so they can respond appropriately to the development. Meanwhile I give half a day a week to chaplaincy at Jaguar Land Rover’s assembly plant at Castle Bromwich (originally built to manufacture Spitfire aircraft), where all the Jaguar cars are assembled.

I send fond best wishes to Tatsfielders who may remember me. My time in the village and the Titsey Group of those days was memorable and I learnt a great deal. I often remember you in my prayers not least when the magazine arrives each month!

If you are interested in the development here, the website www.longbridgebirmingham.co.uk is helpful and our church website is at www.longbridgeparishchurch.com.

Colin Corke

**A HUGE THANK YOU....**

... to Jean Gibbons for finding my purse and keeping it safe for me. Apart from the money contained within, it held much sentimental value. It is good to know we have honest neighbours in our special village.

Chris Roux-Martyn

**FOR SALE**

“Tena” single size waterproof sheets. 30p each or box of 80 for £20. Please phone 577488.

**MULLED WINE AND MINCE PIES....**

... and marvellous music! Handel’s Messiah sung in a candle-lit church by The English Arts Chorale on Saturday 3rd December. What a joyous start to the Christmas celebrations! Directed by Leslie Olive, together with The Camerata of London and a splendid line-up of soloists, the performance will take place in St Mary’s Church, Chart Lane, Reigate at 7.30 pm. The church will be candle-lit, and the audience will be offered complimentary mulled wine and mince pies to round off the evening. Tickets £18/ £15/ £12 from www.englisharts.org or by telephone 01737 762097.
WORLD MASTERS’ CYCLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

I did a lot of cycle racing in my younger days, and, even if I say so myself, I used to be pretty good at it. To keep at the top level, however, you need to spend a lot of time training, and the pressures of business and family life meant that I gave up competing for many years. When I retired, I started riding again, at first just to keep fit, but the old competitive urge came back. There are annual World Championships for veteran cyclists, and I wanted to win one of those medals.

The World Masters’ Championships are divided into different age categories, and five years ago I competed in the Road and Track Championships. There were competitors from all over the world, and they were incredibly fast. I didn’t disgrace myself, but didn’t get into the medals. Obviously, I had to train harder…..

My training during the next four years was interrupted by illnesses and accidents, causing me to miss the Championships held in those years, but this year I would be 75 just before the Championships, and thus be one of the youngest in my age category. I started training at the beginning of January, and really worked hard. The Road Races were held in Austria in late August, and coincided with a period of exceptionally hot weather there, with temperatures reaching over 100°F. The heat was exhausting, and I was tired before I even started any of the races. It was so hot that a lot of the people entered did not actually compete, despite having travelled there from all over the world. I was 13th out of 50 in the Time Trial, and 23rd out of 50+ in the Road Race – by no means a disgrace, but no medal…

After returning from Austria I had 7 weeks to prepare for the Track Championships, which were to be held at the Velodrome in Manchester. When I competed there 5 years ago, I was 4th in the Pursuit. This year I was 4th in the 500 metres Time Trial, and 3rd in the Pursuit. I had a medal!

I did say that after this year I wouldn’t compete in the Championships any more, but, you know, a gold medal would be good. I’ve got a training programme mapped out, and have already started on it. Watch this space.

Roy Savery

Editor: You will see Roy, who lives in Goatsfield Road, around the village, sometimes in cycling kit. If you ask nicely, he will autograph this article for you!
Tatsfield Vern D’Anjou Association present a

NEW YEAR’S EVE PARTY

31st December 2011
7 ‘til 1 (carriages at 12.30)
Tatsfield Village Hall

2 COURSE MEAL • LICENSED BAR • DISCO

Adults £20
Under 16s £10

Tickets available from Rosie and Pete Fuller on 573 554 also on sale at Linda’s Stores
Captivating. Utterly captivating. That is my immediate response to the concert I attended on 12th November. When Peter Maynard asked me some time ago if I would go to the next North Downs Sinfonia Concert in the Village Hall and write the review I said yes without really thinking. Many people had told me what good concerts they were so I was keen to go along.

On the day of the concert I was chatting to somebody and told them that I was going to a concert in the evening and had been asked to write a review. They said ‘Are you very musical then? Do you know a lot about classical music?’ Well I like music, I enjoying singing, I listen to Classic FM sometimes but no, I’m certainly not an expert in classical music. I am the kind of person who may hear a piece of music played, recognize it, often find myself humming the melody but am seldom able to name the piece or the composer. Suddenly I felt a little worried as to whether I was qualified to write such a review.

When the music started my anxiety about my lack of technical expertise vanished. I was whisked away in a world of emotion so beautifully expressed by this most talented and varied group of musicians. The music swept me along through glimpses of light and darkness weaving in and out between moments of great intensity and at times playful lightness. Many times I felt moved to tears and then lifted again to great joy.

This was the first classical concert that I have been to for many years. I am certainly no expert in reviewing classical music or orchestras but this concert reminded me of the extraordinary power that music has to connect with our very deepest emotions, the way in which it can stir our souls in ways words struggle to articulate.

This orchestra had a synergy that drew the listener into the music in a way that I can only describe as enabling us to ‘truly feel’ the music. The solo parts were all fantastic and Robin Wilson who played the violin solos in Brahms’ Violin Concerto was truly sensational and without a note of music in front of him! The way in which
he ‘felt’ the music enabled us to enter into the music in a way that was about so much more than just the technicalities of the piece (although I believe all the pieces were technically excellent!). But music is about so much more than simply playing the right notes at the right time - of course that helps! There is something else, much harder to articulate which, when there, truly brings music to life. That ‘something’ was there in this concert! The music was more than simply just played. It was felt. It was evident that the superb conductor, Jem Muharrem, and the orchestra ‘felt’ the music in a way that went beyond the notes and this enabled the audience to be swept right into the depths of the music.

If you want to know about the musical technicality of the pieces performed I am not the right person to ask. No doubt there are many in our village who could assist there! But I can tell you that this concert moved me in ways I would not have imagined. I found it inspiring, captivating, poignant and yet joyful. I would sincerely recommend the next concert to you all! Whether you be a classical music buff or someone who just enjoys to listen, a trip to the next concert by the North Downs Sinfonia will be a trip worth making.

In addition to the superb music there was an exceedingly informative programme providing an interesting history of the composers and pieces as well as engaging information about the soloists and conductor. I was particularly interested to read that at its premiere, Brahms’ Violin Concerto in D Major was not well received and attracted only minor amounts of applause and that it was only later on that this work was recognised as one of Brahms’ finest. Well, as far as I am aware this is the first time I have heard this concerto performed and I loved it! As it would seem did the rest of the audience as it certainly attracted a great deal of applause.

A wonderful evening. A friendly atmosphere, lovely refreshments and outstanding music. Watch out for details of the next concert!

Louise Ellis
**EVENTS IN DECEMBER AT WESTERHAM**


2nd 3rd 4th  Festival of Christmas Trees, St Mary's Church, Westerham, Free entry Friday evening 5 pm to 7 pm Saturday 10 am to 6 pm Sunday Noon to 4.30 pm.

3rd 5 pm  A Festive Celebration St Mary’s Church with harps, choirs, seasonal readings, carol singing. Tickets £7 (Heritage Members £6) Children £2 From Amelia Rose, The Green, Westerham or by phoning 561330.

4th 5 pm  Carols round the Christmas Tree on The Green with the Orpington Band, free mulled wine and mince pies

10th and 17th  Free PARKING in Westerham

**NATIVITY SCENE AT ST MARY’S – IN TRADITIONAL ITALIAN STYLE**

Many of you will remember the magnificent nativity scenes that have been created in the church entrance area over recent years. We are delighted that once again Sauro Gabelli will, with some help from family and friends, be building another tableau for us this year – an old Italian tradition. He hopes to have completed this by 12th December and it will stay in place until the New Year. Do come along and have a look – he incorporates some new features each year.

Sauro will have worked very hard on this magnificent spectacle in the expectation of raising lots of money for [The Children’s Society](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/). Please try to include a donation when you visit – this may be put in the wall safe beside the oak cupboard not far from the tableau.

**FRESH FISH AND FRESH MEAT AT WARLINGHAM**

We have been missing our fresh fish since the fish van on Friday mornings stopped coming. However, a fish van (called “Gillies Fish”) parks outside the Co-op in Warlingham every Friday morning from 8 am to 12 noon. The fish comes straight from Hastings.

Also, every Friday morning from 8.30 to 11.30 am there is a meat van (David from Sussexway Meat) parked in the While Lion car park at Warlingham Green. He sells local, traditional and organic meats from Ray Lodge Farm. He will be selling turkeys, ducks and geese for Christmas.

Their website is [www.sussexwaymeat.com](http://www.sussexwaymeat.com).

_This information was kindly provided by Brenda Allen._
MESSAGE FROM DEVON

So here we are in the deepest depths of Devon, and hopefully as you read this, about to move into our new home after major refurbishment works and just in time for Xmas. Yes, it was a difficult decision to leave our many friends in Tatsfield, but keeping in touch via phone and email works well. We are already making new friends and it is taking some time to adjust to the slower (and better) pace of life, although Eleanor does miss her dog walking and pet watch, so she has been practicing with the local sheep at the moment(?). We wanted to convey our heartfelt thanks to all of our friends for their thoughts and good wishes on our departure and since. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in return through this excellent magazine and also to say to you all, a very MERRY CHRISTMAS AND BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR.

David and Eleanor Wood (and Megan) (Tel: 01805 603 563)

WHAT’S ON AT THE OLD SHIP?

Christmas now has top priority in everyone’s thoughts, and bookings for our Christmas menu are coming in nicely. So anyone still thinking about eating with us, please get booked to avoid disappointment (577315).

Something very close to our hearts is the Chartwell Trust Charity and on Saturday 10th December we are holding a fund raising evening and, yes, he is alive – Elvis will be performing here in his very smart GI uniform. There is no entrance charge so just come along and enjoy the evening.

Opening times at Christmas are:
Christmas Day 12 – 3 pm
Boxing Day 12 – 3 pm
New Year’s Eve 12 – 2 am

May we take this opportunity to wish you Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

All at the Old Ship: Carol, Amanda, Jane, Hannah, Gemma, Lucy, Lisa, Emma, Sahara, Teo, Denise, Jane, Kay, Hayley and Charlotte
A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A YOUNG TENNIS PLAYER FROM TATSFIELD

Abby Taylor from Tatsfield has been playing tennis for the last few years on and off until she played in a team tennis tournament early in 2010 and she and her team mate played every weekend for a couple of months and continued to keep winning until they eventually got into the finals and won the whole competition.

Abby's year (2011) started with her playing different tournaments each week and trying to get her tennis rating higher. She played every Saturday or Sunday and kept on winning each tournament. Abby played with her parents twice each week in the evenings and practised early mornings with her coach before school and because of her dedication her rating continued to improve until she became a Green 1, which is the highest rating she could get for her age group of 10 and under.

Now that she had got her rating up she then played in higher grade tournaments, which meant that she played all the best players and she found that the players that she came up against were much better and more experienced than she had been used too. However, after a few weeks she got used to the better players and started to win a few of the tournaments and suddenly was winning regularly against some of the best players in the south east of England. Abby’s achievements over a relatively short period of time brought her to the attention of the Surrey Lawn Tennis Association and the coaches in charge of the county players.

Abby was invited with 11 of the best players in Surrey to take part in the selection process to decide which four players would represent Surrey in the County Cup team tournament in which 48 counties from England, Wales and Scotland would take part. Abby and her family went along to the Espota club in Croydon in March and took part in the training on three Saturdays and then was told that the players would have to go into groups and the winners would be part of the team. Abby and three others qualified. At the end of the qualification the families were told that the regional competition would take place the following weekend at the Kent LTA in Orpington.

Surrey played 3 other counties - Berkshire, Isle of Wright and Kent - and Abby and the Surrey team beat all 3 teams, taking them up to the finals at the Bolton Arena 2 weeks later.

All the teams and coaches for the counties stayed in hotels near the Arena over 3 days to battle out against each other. The favourites to win the cup were Surrey in
the Boys cup and Middlesex for the Girls. Over the three days the Surrey girls continued to beat the other teams and eventually they met the Middlesex girls in the final. With the score at 2–1 in rubbers to Middlesex, Abby had to play in the doubles for Surrey and she and her partner took the match to make it 2–2, which meant a championship tie break and the first team to get to 10 points would be the winners. Abby and her partner had the most amazing rallies, one taking 98 shots. The last point was finished with a drop shot from Abby to win the tournament.

Abby has since won several other tournaments including the Surrey postal tournament and the Kent schools tournament for her school and she was recently runner up in the Surrey closed championships. Now Abby is looking to take part in international tournaments.

Abby is now looking for sponsors to help her to continue her journey and is hoping to make tennis her career as she gets older. So if you or your business would be interested in sponsoring Abby, please call me on 01959 577536.

Jeremy Taylor

THE CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGALONG

It’s Christymouse time again and as I get older the best time of the year seems to come around even quicker. Mind you, the whiz kid “horti” expert, Jon Allbutt, told me that this year has been quite different with the weather being very much warmer. Rewind back to last year in December and bring back to mind the annual Carol Singalong outside the Ship pub. The snow and ice was very pretty to see in our lovely village but blow me down it was blooming cold. I can still picture in my mind the breath of Father Christmas when he came with his pretty Elf assistants to give all of the children their Christmas presents.

So this year the Singalong will be on Friday December 16 starting at 7pm and we are delighted to have the Tatsfield Singers with us once again under their conductor Alex Deterding. Also the Lewisham Concert Band will be with us once again. We have (once again) had the much-appreciated assistance from the Parish and Tandridge Councils, as without their help the event wouldn’t happen. Carol and Amanda will have mince pies and hot mulled wine available from the Ship pub as always and we have heard from Father Christmas that his group are “go” and will arrive at around 7.40 pm. Of course we will need the “usual” gang of grafters to start erecting the equipment, marquee and electrics, poster painting and all that jazz, from 10 am in the morning, so thanks chaps for your kind help in advance. If you can offer a bit of time on the day to erect it (and take it all down afterwards), we would be very much obliged to you for your time and perhaps you could kindly give me a call please on 577550 to say that you will help.

Dave Bishop
Easter 2012 Trip to Vern d'Anjou

Our coach leaves early on Good Friday April 6th and returning home on Tuesday April 10th.

Sample the superb hospitality of our twin town in France, Vern d'Anjou in the wonderful Loire Valley. You’ll stay with French families enjoying their warm hospitality and of course wonderful food and wine!

Don’t miss this fantastic experience taking in all that rural France has to offer in the company of Tatsfield friends and family.

Open to residents of Tatsfield

Be a part of this unique experience!

TO FIND OUT MORE CONTACT PETE FULLER
tel: (01959) 573 554 or
e-mail: peter.fuller@tiscali.co.uk
SUPPORTING SPORT IN TATSFIELD

Congratulations to the Tatsfield Playing Field Association 100 Club winners for October:

1st prize: Dave King  £34.50
2nd prize: Stuart Hendry  £23.00
3rd prize: Alan Thorpe  £11.50

The Tatsfield 100 Club still has a number of slots available for anyone wishing to help sport thrive in Tatsfield. By joining the 100 Club, for as little as £6.00 per month, you could win one of three cash prizes drawn every month, whilst giving a much needed financial boost to the Tatsfield Playing Field Association at Furze Corner. Funds raised in recent years have enabled improvements to the clubhouse and grounds including the installation of new showers, upgrading the electrical systems, and the refurbishment of the changing rooms and social areas.

When your first payment is received in the 100 Club account you will be given a number (between 1 and 100) which will be put into the draw. If there were 100 members then the prizes each month would be: 1st prize £150.00; 2nd Prize £100.00; 3rd prize £50.00. Obviously with less than 100 members, then the prizes are less on a pro rata basis. The more members the bigger the prizes! You can have as many numbers as you want at just £6.00 per month per number.

If you wish to join the 100 Club then please contact Les Eames by e-mail at leseames@yahoo.co.uk for a form to enable a standing order to be set up with your bank.

If anyone is interested in playing cricket for Tatsfield (who this year had their most successful season ever, winning 11 out of 15 matches), then they should contact Gary Weaver on 07906 795884. Indoor net sessions will be starting again in the New Year.

The football club is now celebrating over 70 years of community football, but urgently need an injection of support to keep the club thriving in the future. They are also looking for mini soccer teams, sponsors and committee support for this and next season. If anyone is interested then please contact Robin Muir on 07533 033325.

Finally the clubhouse at Furze Corner is also available for some private functions - for details contact Robin Muir on 07533 033325.

Les Eames
It is now almost a year, in fact it was the 11th August 2010 since I wrote: “Sitting in our lovely back garden on a folding wooden chair, small glass of wine in one hand, Tilley our Burmese cat, mother of four kittens 10 years ago, two of which we still have, neatly settled on my lap, purring happily”. Little did I know then that a few weeks later she would be violently killed. We could not prove what actually killed her but we have our suspicions. So now no more company of that brave and loyal creature who would seek me out come rain or shine; if I sat in the garden she would find me.

Back to the 11th August 2010, when I wrote: “The clouds, as I sat thinking, were passing rapidly across the sky, sometimes rolling fat black rain clouds, occasionally a burst of white light would burst through small openings in the cloud, the sun was starting to settle down for the day. Suddenly the sky would be clear of the storm clouds replaced by white puffs of softness.

The noise level of the avian residents in the garden hedgerow rose and fell as the feathered inhabitants, mainly Sparrows, led their normal frantic life. Nature goes on regardless – birds come to feed, also to drink and bathe in the bird bath or small pond.

Tilley has stirred and jumped off my lap, a pair of Magpies have just landed in the garden and the hedgerow goes instantly silent. Stunning looking but aggressive and greedy, they are very much the villains of the bird world.”

Which brings me to 9th August 2011, when I noted that since putting the above to paper we have endured the second extremely severe period of bad weather in two years, this second period starting in November 2010. A prolonged period of snow and extremely icy conditions meant constantly clearing snow away to enable us to put out a regular supply of food and water to keep the assorted bird population alive. In that period our resident Robin became so trusting it would actually sit on my hand to eat its favourite food (meal worms) - dried, I hasten to add.

Finally, winter gave way to a glorious, hot, sunny spring. The snow melted away to uncover a profusion of spring bulbs, new life blossomed. We enlarged our garden pond which was then crowded with frogspawn; water skaters darted about on the surface and the plants both marginal and deep water bloomed in their new found space. The birds thrived and bred a new generation of noisy offspring. The sky was a brilliant blue, day after day, high above vapour trails from jet liners which criss crossed the blue, looking like long curly rolls of cotton wool.
Along with our regular feathered visitors, we now have a daily visit from a Fox cub which has a bad leg. One of a pair, the slightly lame one now looks forward to us feeding it and is very trusting. The able one, however, dashes off at the sight of anyone. To watch the lame one trying to stop Magpies stealing its food is amusing, though slightly sad as it cannot stop the feathered villains from getting away with much of it. The group of Magpies split up so the Fox cannot watch all of them at once.

I am sure there are many people who consider the Fox as vermin and an unwanted pest. However, I am of the opinion that to see any wild life is better than seeing none at all. To be trusted by a wild creature is an amazing thing and hard earned.

More later.

Eddie Leeves

CHILDREN’S FANCY DRESS HALLOWEEN DISCO

This Disco was held on Sunday 30th October, raising much needed funds for Tatsfield Playground. The event was a sellout with all 120 tickets sold well in advance of the day itself. The Village Hall was transformed into an eerie themed abode, decorated from top to bottom with cobwebs, spiders, ghosts, balloons etc… and all the children entered into the spirit of the occasion coming dressed in fabulous costumes from pumpkins to skeletons!

Thanks must go to everyone who helped on the day itself be it donating decorations, transforming the hall, serving drinks, selling glow novelties to monitoring the children – it couldn’t have been done without you, so thank you!

The entertainment was provided and sponsored by Neil at Hits Discos (01959 541042) who did a fantastic job of keeping the children thoroughly entertained throughout.

In total, almost £750 was raised to go towards PARROT (Play Area Renewal and Refurbishment is our Target)!

Tara Jones and Sarah Turrell

FOR SALE

Samsonite folding man's suitcase with hangers. Used only once. £15. Please phone 577679.
## DECEMBER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Thur</td>
<td>9.15am</td>
<td><strong>Morning Prayer - StM</strong></td>
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<td>5.30pm</td>
<td>Brownies - CH</td>
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<td>7.45pm</td>
<td>Tatsfield Singers - TPS</td>
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<td>2 Fri</td>
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<td>Short Mat Bowls - VH</td>
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<td>8pm</td>
<td>Badminton Club - VH</td>
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<td>3 Sat</td>
<td>11am-12noon</td>
<td>PC Cafe - The Bakery</td>
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<td>4 Sun</td>
<td><strong>8am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) - StM</strong></td>
<td><strong>10am Open the Book - All Age Service - StM</strong></td>
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<td>10.30am</td>
<td>Ramblers Walk - Recreation Ground, Biggin Hill</td>
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<td>5 Mon</td>
<td>9.30am</td>
<td>Tots on Top - CH</td>
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<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>Art Group - VH</td>
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<td>8pm</td>
<td>PARISH MAGAZINE CHRISTMAS PARTY - WIH</td>
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<td>6 Tues</td>
<td>10am</td>
<td>Yoga - WIH</td>
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<td>10am-12noon</td>
<td>WI Pop In - WIH</td>
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<td>2.15pm</td>
<td>Tea Dance Social - VH</td>
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<td>8pm</td>
<td>Advent Evening - Torridon, Westmore Road</td>
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<td>8 Thur</td>
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<td><strong>Morning Prayer - StM</strong></td>
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<td>Table Tennis - VH</td>
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<td>Short Mat Bowls - VH</td>
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<td>8pm</td>
<td>Food and Wine Society Christmas Party - Postacre, Ship Hill</td>
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<td>Badminton Club - VH</td>
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<td>12 Mon</td>
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<td>Celebrity Yogalatts - TPS</td>
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<td>Parish Council Meeting - AMB</td>
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<td>13 Tues</td>
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<td>Yoga - WIH</td>
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<td>Tatty Knitters - WIH</td>
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<td>WI Pop In - WIH</td>
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<td>Explorers - SH</td>
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<td>Vets Football - VH</td>
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<td>16 Fri</td>
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<td>Short Mat Bowls - VH</td>
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<td>CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGALONG - Outside the Old Ship</td>
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<td>Badminton Club - VH</td>
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<td>17 Sat</td>
<td>11am-12noon</td>
<td>PC Cafe - The Bakery</td>
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### EVENTS CALENDAR

**18 Sun**  
**8am Holy Communion (BCP) - StM** • **10am Sung Eucharist - StM**  
11am Ramblers Walk - Rosemary Lane, near Bewl Water

**4pm Carols by Candlelight - StM**

**19 Mon**  
9.30am Tots on Top - CH • 1.30pm Bridge Club - WIH • 8.15pm Bingo - TVC

**20 Tues**  
10am Yoga - WIH

TATSFIELD SCHOOL HOLIDAY - 21 DECEMBER TO 3 JANUARY

**21 Wed**  
10am-12noon WI Pop In - WIH

10.30am -1130am PC SO Matthew Nottidge Surgery - PR

**8pm Advent Evening - Torridon, Westmore Road**

**22 Thur**  
**9.15am Morning Prayer - StM** • 2pm WI Darts - WIH

6.30pm Vets Football - VH • 7.30pm Duplicate Bridge - WIH

8pm Table Tennis - VH

2pm Christingle Making - CH • 2pm Short Mat Bowls - VH

5pm Badminton Juniors - VH • 8pm Badminton Club - VH

**23 Fri**

3.30pm Christingle Service - StM • 5pm Christingle Service - StM

11.30pm Midnight Christmas Service - StM

**24 Sat**

CHRISTMAS EVE

3.30pm Christingle Service - StM • 5pm Christingle Service - StM

11.30pm Midnight Christmas Service - StM

**25 Sun**

CHRISTMAS DAY

**10am Sung Eucharist - StM**

**26 Mon**

BOXING DAY

**27 Tues**

BANK HOLIDAY

**28 Wed**

10am-12noon WI Pop In - WIH

**29 Thur**  
**9.15am Morning Prayer - StM**

30 Fri

2pm Short Mat Bowls - VH • 5pm Badminton Juniors - VH

8pm Badminton Club - VH

**31 Sat**

11am-12noon PC Café - The Bakery • 7pm NEW YEARS PARTY - VH

### JANUARY

1 Sun

NEW YEAR’S DAY

**10am Sung Eucharist - StM**

2 Mon

BANK HOLIDAY

1.30pm Bridge Club - WIH

3 Tues

10am Yoga - WIH

TATSFIELD SCHOOL RETURNS

4 Wed

10am-12noon WI Pop In - WIH

10.30am -1130am PC SO Matthew Nottidge Surgery - PR

8pm Yoga - VH

5 Thur  
**9.15am Morning Prayer - StM** • 2pm WI Darts - WIH

7.30pm Duplicate Bridge - WIH • 8pm Table Tennis - VH

6 Fri

2pm Short Mat Bowls - VH • 5pm Badminton Juniors - VH

8pm Badminton Club - VH

7 Sat

11am - 12noon PC Café- The Bakery

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**Venues**  
Amb - Aileen McHugo Building • CH - Church Hall • FC - Furze Corner • PR - Parish Room • SH - Scout Hut • StM - St. Mary’s Church • TPS - Tatsfield Primary School • TVC - Tatsfield Village Club • VH - Village Hall • WIH - Women’s Institute Hall
VILLAGE NEWS

WESTERHAM FINE ARTS SOCIETY

Founded only six years ago this local society, independent of NAD-FAS, is going from strength to strength. With an ever growing friendly enthusiastic membership, our lecture meetings on diverse subjects are held on the first Wednesday of the month in Westerham Hall and are increasingly well attended. The Bar opens at 7.30 and the talks begin at 8 pm.

Our 2012 season launches on 4th January with an illustrated talk on “David Hockney: the Modern Traditionalist” by Jill Brownbill. Subjects through the year include - "Dickens - a Ring of Fire", "Churchill’s Sculptor", "Thomas Chippendale", “The Boy who bit Picasso” and “Mosaics of Ravenna”.

Subscriptions for membership for the 2012 season are £30 each or £50 per couple; this includes eleven lectures. In addition, outings to Westminster Abbey with the Purcell Club, Farley Farmhouse, Lambeth Palace and the British Museum have been arranged as well as Gallery Groups. Visitors are made very welcome, paying £4 on the door. For a programme or membership enquiry, please contact Marril Gibson (Chairman) on 01959 569769 or email marrilgibson@hotmail.com.

“WHEN WOMEN WEE” RAISES £5,000 FOR CANCER AND LEUKAEMIA UNIT, PRINCESS ROYAL HOSPITAL

Local charity, The Chartwell Cancer Trust (The CCT), put on a fundraising event with a difference at The Bakery on Friday, 11th November.

The evening was a complete sell out. Those who attended were not only treated to a first class three course meal but an exclusive one–off performance of “When Women Wee”, a daring and provocative comedy that received 5 star reviews at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this year. The play, written by Rachel Hirons and directed by Stef O'Driscoll, was hilariously acted out by Natasha Sparkes, Stephanie Jay, Amy Revelle, Emily Walis, and Amirah Garbay, all up and coming rising stars and ones to look out for in the future.

The night was a fantastic success. £5,000 was raised from the ticket sales, raffle and auction. Michael Douglas said “Thank you so much to everyone who took part. The money we raise greatly benefits the patients at The Chartwell Cancer and Leukaemia Unit.”

Carol at The Old Ship is also organising a fun charity “Elvis” night at the pub on Saturday, 10th December. Entry is free so please come and show your support. For more details call Carol on 577315. All proceeds from the night are being donated to The Chartwell Cancer Trust.

If you would like more information on The Chartwell Cancer Trust, please phone 571532 or visit www.chartwellcancertrust.co.uk.
TATSFIELD DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB
W.I. HALL, PAYNESFIELD ROAD
TATSFIELD

WE ARE A FRIENDLY AND INFORMAL CLUB
WISHING TO EXPAND.
THE CLUB IS PREPARED TO ASSIST LEARNERS
AND A HELPFUL PARTNER CAN BE PROVIDED.

OUR DUPLICATE SESSIONS ARE :-

MONDAY AFTERNOONS 1.30 TO 4.30PM
THURSDAY EVENINGS 7.30 TO 10.30PM

ADMISSION IS £2.00 PER SESSION WHICH INCLUDES
REFRESHMENTS

SHOULD YOU LIVE OUTSIDE THE AREA YOU
WILL BE MORE THAN WELCOME – A CLUB PARTNER
IS AVAILABLE

FURTHER INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED FROM:-
BOB FAIRCLOUGH – 01959 575636

BRIDGE CLUB
“Open-House” at the Rectory. Sunday 11th December 2:00pm-5:00pm
Louise, Nick, Jessica and James warmly invite you to the Rectory for mince pies and mulled wine on Sunday 12th December. Just pop in any time between 2:00pm and 5:00pm.

All Soul’s Service on 30 October
This quiet service of thanksgiving and prayer was greatly appreciated by those present even though it had to be held in the hall as a result of a misbehaving fire alarm in the church.

Remembrance Sunday, November 14th
The Act of Remembrance was very well attended this year with around 100 people. It was lovely to be joined by many villagers as well as Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Brownies all in uniform.

St Mary’s Swap Shop with a Twist
This fun evening last month when everyone came with an outfit they no longer wanted and went home with one that they did, raised just over £100 which will be going to a great cause: St Mary’s supports David and Shelley Stokes who are currently working in Argentina to improve the quality of life for people there.

Wednesday evenings in Advent
These will be on Wednesdays 8pm at Torridon, starting on 30th November. As we travel through Advent this course will use the Sunday readings and talk to help us to reflect on this season of expectant waiting. Everyone welcome. If you miss the Sunday talks don’t worry there will be notes available! Although it would of course be nice to see everyone on the Sundays as well!

Open the Book
The November service marvelled at the properties of water and gave thanks for all the invaluable roles it plays in our lives. We also saw how water provides a helpful image of the love that God pours out into our lives.

Our next two of these special services for all ages span the Christmas period. On 4th December we will be giving some thought to preparing for Christmas and you will be able to take away a Children’s Society ‘candle box’ to put any spare pennies in during Advent.

On 8th January we will celebrate the visit of the three ‘wise men’ with their gifts. Please note this service is on the second Sunday of the month – not the first as is usual.
Christingle Making, 23rd December, 2.00pm in Church Hall

Come and help turn oranges, sweets, fruit and candles into these symbols of the Christmas festival in preparation for our two Christingle services on Christmas Eve – fun for all the family.

Christmas services

These are listed on the Christmas card accompanying this magazine and we hope to see you at one or more of them. If you would like an antidote to the hectic ‘secular’ lead up to Christmas then the Advent Wednesday evening gatherings will offer some quiet reflective time. At the candlelit carol service (18\textsuperscript{th}) we will be joined by The Tatsfield Singers, our community choir. Mince pies and mulled wine will follow.

The Christmas Eve Christingle service has proved so popular that we now have two of them [3.30 and 5 pm] to avoid having to turn people away! Please come to whichever is more convenient for you. Children are invited to come dressed as shepherds, angels or wise men - a simple approximation will do! The crib figures of Mary and Joseph are welcomed back into church at the end of their journey round homes in the village. These services mark the real start of our celebration of Christmas and are always enjoyed by all, from the eldest to the very youngest.

There will also be our traditional ‘midnight’ celebration of Holy Communion [at 11.30 pm!] and a service for all the family on Christmas morning at 10 am.

As usual, collections taken at all services over the Christmas period will go to The Children’s Society: this organisation does so much across the country to support children who have been very badly treated by adults and by society, and to turn their lives around.

Posada

The figures of Mary and Joseph are now on their way around the village during Advent. They stay at different houses for a short period of up to a day and then end their journey on Christmas Eve by arriving at the church during the Christingle service.

Church Flowers

There will be no flowers in the Church during Advent: 4th December - 2\textsuperscript{nd} Sunday in Advent, 11\textsuperscript{th} - 3\textsuperscript{rd} Sunday in Advent and 18\textsuperscript{th} – 4\textsuperscript{th} Sunday in Advent.

We will be decorating the Church for Christmas on Thursday 22nd December starting at 10 am. If you would like to help with the floral arrangements you will be most welcome. Please contact me.

JanMaynard (Tel: 577659)
EXCITEMENT AT THE ISLE OF WIGHT

Eagle Class have been learning how to write newspaper reports. Here are three written about their experiences at the Isle of Wight.

Eagles on Quadbikes

*by Ciaran Mullan*

Two weeks ago, thirty children from Eagle class went to an activity centre on the Isle of Wight and had fun on quadbikes and many other exciting activities. Bayley Hodges thought the quadbikes were brilliant. “I had a lot of fun, especially when we went by ourselves,” he said. First, the children listened to the instructor telling them what the brakes and accelerator were for, then they got to go on a quadbike. Harry Boys said, “I’d never driven a quadbike before and I was really excited.” Another brilliant activity was trapeze. The group had to put on harnesses, which were very complicated, and then they climbed a wobbly pole. Sam Carlile said the activity was, “Really fun and exhilarating. When I got up there I was filled with excitement.” Eagle class agreed they would keep many good memories from their time at the Isle of Wight.

Eagles spotted at the Isle of Wight

*by Harry Boys*

Yesterday evening, Eagles were seen zooming down a zipwire at PGL Little Canada. Year 6 Eagle Class, from Tatsfield Primary School in Kent, were spending a week having remarkable fun at PGL. Laughing could be heard all
around the camp as children launched themselves into all the many amazing activities.
During their stay at Little Canada, Eagles were split into three groups and marched to all the many incredible activities, such as awesome zipwire, remarkable quadbiking, investigating little habitats and abseiling down a wooden wall. One of the pupils, Ciaran Mullan, said, “I have never been on a quadbike before in my life. It was so much fun.”
One of the more heart-thumping activities was cat walk. This involved wearing a harness and being suspended up in the air as you carefully walked along a thin, quivering rope. “I was terrified,” yelled Mollie Burton, “My hands were tingling with fear.”
After a tiring day, Eagles could just relax in a warm, cosy, log cabin and think about the hectic day they had just had.
Eagle Class had the time of their lives at the best adventure park ever.

Eagles on the move
By James Nicholls

An excited Year 6 Eagle Class from Tatsfield School visited the Isle of Wight last week to have fun at an adventure resort called Little Canada.
The class travelled by coach, ferry and train to get to their destination.
Jack Ellis, a pupil, said, “It was very exciting because I’ve never been on a ferry before.”
The group stayed in warm comfortable log cabins. As soon as they had unpacked, they went off to do an amazing quadbiking activity but first they had to do their driving test. If they went too fast, a cord came out and the engine cut off. Harvey Westerman said, “It was very exciting and we loved driving on our own.” Another highlight was the pitstop challenge, where the children had to take a tyre off a quadbike and the fastest team won.
The zipwire was another great challenge that everyone took part in. The children put their harnesses on and climbed up a wobbly pole. It was very scary for some people. Some children looked down and thought it was very high up. But once they were on the zipwire, the children could feel the breeze as they flew through the air.
Eagle Class’ experiences at the Isle of Wight will be remembered for a very long time.
‘A VARIED AND DIVERSE LIFE SO FAR!: A PROFILE OF GEORGE FARMER’
by Sue White

George Farmer came into the world on 28th May 1938 and has lived life to the full ever since! It seems to me he has ensured he has a great balance between family, work and hobbies. See what you think….

George grew up during the Second World War and was evacuated from Streatham to his mother’s relatives in Liverpool in 1941. Just as he and Don, his older brother, arrived the enemy began bombing Liverpool and they were sent back. Many hours were then spent in various camps on bomb sites, where they took great pleasure in sneaking up on other gang’s camps putting a lump of concrete on top of their chimney and watching them come rushing out choking with smoke!

Work began after leaving Battersea Grammar with an Electrical apprenticeship at Brighton Power Station but George realised this path was not for him and 6 months later he commenced training as an Architectural Assistant in Tamworth Park Construction, Crystal Palace, building housing estates in the South East (incidentally Pat Chamberlain of Tatsfield also worked there!). George progressed onto night school for 7 years at Brixton School of Building to obtain his MCIOB (Member of the Chartered Institute of Building). Having been in The Boys Brigade and The Coldstream Guards Army Cadet Corps, George was one of the few young men looking forward to ‘call up’, but was disappointed when this was deferred because of his MCIOB finals. Once he had qualified, ‘call up’ had been abolished! In 1963 he joined Greater London Council, County Hall, Architects Department developing overspill towns such as Haverhill, Thetford, Whitham and Andover.

By 1962 George had found Tatsfield and moved to Old Lane where he began to renovate ‘Cottage’. Three years later he moved to Westmore Road, converting it to a hairdressers with a flat above. 1971 saw him moving to a cottage on Cheveralls Farm near Botley. At this time he also bought a holiday home overlooking the harbour in Mevagissey, Cornwall where he has spent many a day fishing. Sea fishing (and fly fishing) is a great love of George’s and along with Doug Marner and Maddison and Cliff Cole amongst others, he has had many trips sea fishing, accompanied by his poor old golden retriever Kim, who always had trouble finding his ‘land legs’ after a day at sea, keeping everyone in stitches as he staggered around on dry land!

George did not leave Westmore Road for very long as the following year he bought back his old house! George then went on to join Marks and Spencer plc in the building group as an Area Surveyor dealing with the refurbishment, development
and up-grading of various stores. This often meant leaving home on a Monday morning and returning on a Friday evening to Pat, who he married in 1974, and his three children, Joanna, Stuart and Debra. Each additional child meant an ‘add on’ to the house! Six grandchildren have followed (thankfully not requiring any more building work to Westmore Road!) and this year George and Pat have been blessed with their first great grandchild. While his children were young, George rented an area behind his house where Wedgwoods now is and constructed a children’s play area, complete with aerial runway, tree houses and farmyard with chickens, geese and an ornamental pheasant, which led to frequent visits from many local children to play with his young family!

George retired in 1988 following a brain haemorrhage and when recovering from his illness his family treated him to a three day Raptor Course at Eagle Heights in Kent. Many in the village will have seen the result – a pair of European Eagle Owls and a Red Tailed Buzzard, Ka! Just before Christmas two years ago Ka escaped and following various sightings by helpful villagers for the next two weeks, she returned. George discovered that Ka had spent two days of this in the Limpsfield garden of the composer Richard Stilgoe, who delighted in the whole experience!

Another ‘name dropping’ that George is very proud of is that of shaking the hand of Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, when he had the honour of ‘picking up’ for him on the Squerries Shoot when Neil and some of his astronauts flew over with their wives from America for English Shooting Week. Over the years George has joined various local shooting syndicates and is very involved in the conservation side of shooting via the British Association for Shooting and Conservation. He is a member of the South East Gundog Society, which followed on from running dog training clubs in Bromley, with Doug and Mick Marner and Tony Erbes. All his children and grandchildren have become involved over the years and been able to form their own ideas about Country Pursuits and explain to ‘Townies’ that there is a great deal more than killing involved. George has two wonderful gun dogs, a black Labrador and a liver and white Springer Spaniel.
Other hobbies over the years have included sailing, which resulted in crewing for Bovis in the Isle of Wight Round the Island Race, playing for Tatsfield Football Team, participating with his family in the Tatsfield Carnival (though not quite up to the ‘Paynesfield Road Gang’, this did lead to many ‘pedestrian’ prizes!) and learning to ski at the grand age of 56!

George has also been involved with the Horticultural Society over the years, leading to some strange entries, one of which was a white Coaching chicken, Mrs Clutterbuck, a great family pet and a favourite of his daughter Joanna. Poor old Mrs Clutterbuck was not fit to show following a torrential night of rain which left her extremely muddy! Following a flippant ‘oh just give her a bath!’ comment from Daddy, Joanna promptly did just that and Mummy finished the job with a hairdryer! This led to first place of course.

Following his ‘cancer escapade’ four years ago, as George calls it, he and Pat purchased a caravan and to the surprise and hilarity of their family have enjoyed some fantastic holidays. In recent years George has also discovered ‘cooking’, although in a man's way (sorry male readers) with a trail of cluttered worktops and dirty dishes left in his wake!

George has also been delighted to receive recognition in the form of various cups and trophies for his contribution to Tatsfield in Bloom, where he takes great pleasure in making as good a show as possible in their garden. However, his latest venture into the world of ‘allotmenteering’ has given him the greatest satisfaction of recent times, with a freezer now full of vegetables – ‘even if the carrots do look like something from outer space!’. To top it all George’s red cabbage won ‘Best in Show’ in the Autumn Horticultural Show.

George hugely appreciates Pat and his family who have been a tower of support and strength throughout his two serious illnesses. He and Pat also feel very privileged to have been permitted and trusted to take all the grandchildren away on various holidays over the years, much to their delight and pleasure – ‘and hopefully theirs also!’ In George’s own words, he has led a ‘varied and diverse life so far’ and ‘God willing’ is looking forward to more adventures and discoveries with his ‘family, friends and this great village’.
If you look towards the south during early December evenings, the constellation of Pegasus (the mythological winged horse) is at its highest. The major portion of it is an asterism (a group of stars) called the “Square of Pegasus”, which turns out to be something of a misnomer. In fact the top left star in the square doesn’t belong to Pegasus at all but is instead the brightest star (designated by the Greek letter alpha - α) in the neighbouring constellation of Andromeda. Within it lies the most distant object visible to the naked eye - the Andromeda Spiral Galaxy otherwise known as M31 in the numbering system devised by Charles Messier, a French astronomer. It has a structure similar to our galaxy, the Milky Way, but is far larger, containing something in the region of one trillion stars (that’s a one followed by twelve zeros).

When I say M31 is “in” Andromeda that isn’t strictly true. In most cases the stars in any constellation are not related to each other - they just happen to lie in a similar line of sight. On the map I’ve included the Greek letters for the main stars in Andromeda, and if we look at their distances the nearest is alpha (α) at 97 light years, then delta (δ) at 101, beta (β) at 199 and gamma (γ) at 350 light years. From this you can see they are in no way connected, and moreover if we look at M31 we find that it is 2.5 million light years away. It is very faint, but if you look at it tonight the light that reaches your eye left the galaxy on its way to us 2.5 million years ago.

The map also shows some other constellations in the area around Pegasus, of which Aries, Pisces and Aquarius belong to the Zodiac. Included is the planet Jupiter, whose four brightest moons can be seen in binoculars providing they are supported to keep them still.

If it’s clear on the nights of 13th/14th and 14th/15th, don’t forget to look out for “shooting stars” from the Geminid meteor shower. The constellation of Gemini (the area where the meteors appear to radiate from) will be above the eastern horizon by 7pm on those nights.

Brian Mills  FRAS
Introduction:

I can hardly believe it’s the Christmas issue already. But, as it is, and since, once again, none of you have bothered to send me any news or views (oops, sorry, how rude – ‘since none of you had the time to send me any news or views’):

The Archbishop of Canterbury speaks:

It is at this time of year, perhaps more than others, that people look to the Christian Church for inspiration. As you may remember, it was my intention to write to Rowan Williams asking why more use wasn’t made of the Church’s authority to benefit the natural environment. As it happens, I didn’t need to; Mark Williams beat me to it. In his interview, the Archbishop states, ‘I think it’s pretty optimistic to say the Church has dictatorial authority’, and continues by saying that raising morale by giving people the sense that they can make a difference (through individual and local action) is more important than issuing detailed directives or ‘vaguely threatening disaster’. Mm … I can’t help feeling that scientific evidence points to actual disaster rather more than a vague threat! Two days earlier, the Archbishop delivered a speech that was more expansive (13.10.09): ‘We do justice to what we are as human beings when we seek to do justice to the diversity of life around us; we become what we are supposed to be when we assume our responsibility for life continuing on Earth. And that call to do justice brings with it the call to re-examine what we mean by growth and wealth. Instead of a desperate search to find the one great idea that will save us from ecological disaster, we are being invited to a transformation of individual and social goals that will bring us closer to the reality of interdependent life in a variegated world – whether or not we find we can ‘save the planet’. ‘God is committed to life, to the continuance of life on Earth, and whatever happens he will not let life disappear.’ Well, yes, we can be fairly sure that ‘whatever happens’ there will always be life - bacteria, and perhaps ants; and cockroaches. And so, as this Christmastide approaches, what are the Archbishop’s thoughts upon the role of religion in the environmental debate? ‘() The role of religion () is not to provide an ultimate authority that can threaten and coerce us into better behaviour; it is to hold up a vision of human life lived constructively, peacefully, joyfully, in optimal relation with creation and creator, so as to point up the tragedy of the shrunken and harried humanity we have shaped for ourselves by our obsession with growth and consumption.’ ‘() The possibility of life is never exhausted within creation; there is always a future. But in this particular context, this specific planet, that future depends in significant ways on our co-operative, imaginative labour, on the actions of each of us.’ ‘() Our underlying problem is being ‘dissociated’, and we ought to be asking constantly how we restore a sense of association with the material place and time and climate we inhabit and are part of.’ ‘() Whatever we do to combat the nightmare possibilities of wholesale environmental catastrophe has to be grounded not primarily in the scramble for survival but in the hope of human happiness.’
Being practical:

I find that by following that well-used adage, ‘Think Globally, Act Locally’, I am able to partially reconcile my wasteful, commodity-rich lifestyle with the identified need for change. If I pick up litter, I am helping. If I plant a tree, I am helping. If I recycle household waste, I am helping. If I take a group of children for a fungi-walk through natural woodland or bird-spotting across open farmland, I am helping. But, of course, there are bigger issues that both I and others would like to address, but simply don’t have the time, skills, opportunity, knowledge, etc., that would allow us to participate. But that shouldn’t stop us from helping those who do have those necessary requirements, and the simplest way to do this is to subscribe or donate to organisations that carry out good work; and there are many of them. In the past I have supported Greenpeace for their anti-whaling activities, EIA for their investigative work, FFI for their conservation activities and Friends of the Earth for their work with local communities. It’s all a matter of personal choice and nowadays that choice is made a lot easier through internet research. I visited ‘conservation-issues.co.uk’ and followed their ‘conservation links’. My interest in butterflies drew me to ‘Butterfly Conservation’, my repressed interest in minibeasts (penknife, magnifying glass) to ‘Buglife’, and my concern for threatened native wildlife to the ‘People's Trust for Endangered Species’. And then the wild side of me (yes, there is one – hidden deeply within!) is attracted to ‘Sea Shepherds’; those benevolent pirates of the sea with their all-black merchandise and ‘skull-and-crossbones’ styled insignia. Any organised group of seafarers that risks their lives (literally) to protect whales from the ‘scientific’ whalers of Japan are surely worth a pound or two. Why not show your support for a group of favoured environmentalists this Christmas by giving a subscription to someone special? (And that includes yourself!) What a wonderful, thoughtful gift that would be.

Just for fun:

I love collective nouns, and so do most children, especially when they don’t have to follow the rules of vocabulary and are free to express themselves. So, with this in mind, here’s a challenge for all the family. Make up some collective nouns for the wildlife you see around you. For example, the ‘correct’ noun for a flock of Starlings is a ‘murmuration’. Have you heard Starlings murmur? Neither have I! I think a ‘squabble’ is more appropriate (even though that is the accepted term for a collection of Seagulls!) Or how about Magpies? The correct nouns are ‘conventicle’, ‘tiding’ or ‘tittering’, but I prefer a ‘rasp’ or a ‘clack’ of Magpies. Make up your own and send them to me for inclusion in next month’s ‘Nature Notes’. (Incidentally, you don’t need children to take part – just a youthful mind!)

If you read these notes, thank you – I hope you have a very Happy Christmas!

Any news, views or observational reports?

Contact: nigelshaw2000@hotmail.com or leave a note in Linda’s.
I have finally arrived at the centre, or navel, of the world – Jerusalem and the Holy Land – in my year-long quest to unravel many stories of herbs and spices that we use in the UK today. Maps have played a large part in my journey. Back in the Middle Ages cartographers drew maps using the limited knowledge known to them, but the Spirit of the Age shows through whenever you view a “Mappa Mundi” or early Map of Europe, of which there are many. The Tatsfielders who travelled to Hereford Cathedral recently no doubt were fascinated by the Hereford Mappa Mundi displayed there, clearly depicting Jerusalem in the middle, with both Hereford Cathedral and the River Wye included upon its beautifully illustrated vellum surface, safely displayed behind glass. What would they all make of “sat.nav.” today!

The Magi, those “Kings from Persian lands afar”, did not need such a map, as they were travelling probably from Oman and safely following the constellations overhead. Two Gifts they carried were herbally based – Frankincense and Myrrh - and are worthy of discussion at this special time of year. Their Royal gifts are still harvested as resin, or “tears”, tapped from the bark of trees. Frankincense, brought to Europe by the “Franks” or European Crusaders, is taken from the bark of the Boswellia Sacra tree. This is a creamy-white colour, whilst Myrrh is a relative of the Myrtle grown in the UK, and has a red coloured resin obtained in the same way. I hope visitors to the Tatsfield Craft Fair on 20th November enjoyed the luxury of seeing not only Frankincense in its natural form and smelling the essential oil which is distilled from the resin base, but also Myrtle, a very fragrant herb in leaf, flower and wood, an essential part of pot-pourri and used in bridal bouquets throughout the centuries. Many Royal bouquets including Queen Victoria’s have included this pretty and fragrant white flower. However, in the Middle East the hugely-expensive essential oil of Frankincense has been used for over ten thousand years to anoint new-born babies, mixed with oil of the Olive tree, probably gathered and pressed from ancient trees standing nearby. So you can see that Frankincense was a very thoughtful gift from a royal stranger, as his offering to the one newly-born in Bethlehem.

As he grew, this youngster probably gained knowledge from living near Olive trees. The Olive wood burns slowly with great heat, so good for the home fire. Both oil and olive fruits were kitchen essentials in middle-eastern cookery, and a carpenter would also be using the wood on a day-to-day basis, easily found in Nazareth. Even today around the Sea of Galilee and Nazareth olive wood carving for the tourist trade is an important industry; the wood grain is attractive and the older the piece, the more interesting. Oil pressed from olive fruits, now so fashionable, was a major business in the Middle East at the time of Christ, and whole trade routes rose and fell by the annual harvest. Later on the olive tree would have another connection with this story … the Garden of Gethsemane at the foot of the Mount of Olives.
was originally used as an olive press and today safeguards trees 2,000 years old. (In Lebanon, trees 6,000 years old are some of the oldest living things on the planet. A humbling thought.) Later on, both Hyssop and Marjoram would also play their part, both known as important embalming herbs, particularly Hyssop which is a bitter herb with a very oily leaf. The Tatsfield Horse Trough contains both herbs, and Hyssop particularly is worth a glance when in full bloom.

Much of our knowledge of healing herbs came from returning Crusaders around the 12th/13th centuries ... who seem out of our reach in these so-sophisticated computer days, but without them much of Europe would have lagged behind the East for far longer. One instance is the Rose, in particular the Damask forms, brought from the Damascus area and a lovely addition to any herb or country garden. My own favourite is “Isphahan”, named after the ancient Persian capital, and if you bend the branches over in Sissinghurst fashion rather than prune to a tidy shape, you will be rewarded with an amazing mass of pink double blooms that are so fragrant and an absolute joy. The Autumn Damask “Quatre Saisons” has a deep rather haunting scent that blooms twice in a season, and as you can imagine can also be seen adorning the scented gardens beside the sculpted potagers of one Raymond Blanc in Oxfordshire. Meanwhile, way over in Melbourne, an inspirational Australian chef, Greg Malouf, has used “Rose of Damascus,” a Turkish Delight Ice cream with filo pastry and toffee’d whole strawberries, as a signature dish for some years, using his Lebanese ancestry in a positive way. I really do recommend you look him up when Melbourne-way.

Lines on the map may move, enemies change and boundaries alter. Herbs keep growing, recipes keep changing, we adapt and we all absorb things from each other. If I’ve learned that much on this World Tour, I think it has been worth the journey. Hope you’ve been able to travel with me. January looms, and safely back home I’m looking at a Tatsfield stalwart good for garden, kitchen and allotment ... something strangely Sage.

Lin Saines
I ‘adopted’ Sinbad as a Christmas present for our three young grandchildren nearly four years ago, just after he had been rescued from a Romanian Zoo by the Born Free Foundation. They were thrilled to get a large photograph of the young lion and the story of how he was rescued, but they wanted to know more of his new life in a sanctuary in South Africa. Soon afterwards we were going to Africa. ‘Will you be seeing Sinbad, Nana?’ they asked. ‘Well no, Africa is a big place.’

Again last Christmas, they asked ‘Will you be seeing Sinbad?’ And yes we were travelling in the Eastern Cape where Sinbad has his new home. The Born Free Foundation was exceptionally helpful and welcoming. We would visit in February.

It was a rainy, misty day at Shamwari but no matter. Lions with thick manes prefer cooler weather. We are greeted by staff and have so many questions to ask. How is Sinbad adjusting to his new surroundings? What is his weight now? It had been 90 kg when he arrived four years ago, but now he weighs 125kg. He is still only half the weight of a male lion in the wild and half its length and is weak in his back and hind legs.

Trying to spot him we look out on a wide expanse of shrubs and trees - tall aloes, karoo boerbean trees with colourful clusters of bright red flowers, an occasional prickly pear and grass. Sunbirds are flying in the trees, there’s a hum of insects – a very African scene. There are tracks through the thicket but where is the lion? And then - by dint of using our binoculars – we see him in the distance, dozing under a large evergreen Guarri tree. This is his favourite tree and provides shade in hot weather. We hear a roar nearby from his neighbour Ma Juah and Sinbad responds. Our guide is surprised, as she has never witnessed Sinbad roar before. Evidently it takes time for a relocated lion to roar and suggests that he is confident in the safety of his territory. He looks around but seeing no threat - rolls over on his back – and does what lions do best, resumes snoozing. We see no sign of the thick matted fur on his underbelly that was the legacy of his confined space at the zoo.

Distances are great here, and Christine takes us by jeep round to the back of the enclosures. Sinbad must have heard the engine for he is up and stalking the gate. He is very close and we can see his small stature but this does not detract from the beauty of his face and his magnificent mane. He pauses and opens his mouth wide – food surely? Then settles and gives his paws a lick. From here, we see the area where the crate in which he was flown from
Romania was placed four years ago. We remember vividly the video of his crate being opened and the first tentative steps he took. He was so cautious, walking short distances and retreating back to the crate. For the first week he had stayed hidden by an old Spekboom tree, only dashing out to retrieve food and dragging it back into the thicket. He must have been overwhelmed by all the new sensations, the grass beneath his feet, the tall thicket, the smells and sounds of Africa. We are told that gradually over the next three weeks he started to explore his enclosure and had chosen some favourite spots. His arrival caused great excitement to Achwee the neighbouring lioness and they’d seek each other out. Now four years later he is settled - a fully grown lion but made small by his former deprivations.

We didn’t just see Sinbad, but looked at other big cats both at the Julie Ward and the Jean Byrd Centres at Shamwari: Ma Juah and Achwee in their enclosure next to Sinbad, Brutus with his new companion Marina and leopards too. It was an overwhelming experience, memorable to see the big cats and admire the thought that had been taken in their rehabilitation, choosing the setting of the two sanctuaries in the African bush, the huge size of the individual enclosures and the high standards of day to day care. None of these big cats can be released into the wild for they have none of the skills that feral cats need to survive.

Let me tell you the history of some of the lions. Sinbad was rescued from a Romanian Zoo where he was kept in a small cage, with a dirt floor – muddy in wet weather. He had a tyre and log for enrichment. The zoo was too poor to help further. Other lions were rescued from Romanian and Greek zoos, and from a French Circus. Brutus for example, was kept in a dark wagon – less than two square metres in size – for three years. Other lions were similarly confined for much longer and never left their trailers. Ma Juah came from Liberia, where she and a male lion were kept in a concrete pit. The male died of starvation before he could be rescued. Not surprisingly on rescue, Ma Juah stayed within the thicket not eating nor drinking for the first few days. There have been many other rescues. I asked if the lions have memory and yes, even after twelve years, one male reacts badly when he hears Greek spoken, another responds badly to French.

The work of the Born Free Foundation is ever widening, investigating the living conditions of caged animals and for some, providing sanctuaries in various parts of the world. Even in Europe, where all countries should comply with current zoo legislation, there are examples of animals being kept in horrendous conditions. Such animals have no voice. Zoo Check investigations are at the heart of the work of Born Free. You can read their reports and learn more of their work on www.bornfree.org.uk.

Editor: Interested in adopting a lion? A good Christmas present for a child? You can find out more by going to the website or phoning the Born Free Foundation on 01403 240170.

June Wakefield is a biologist living in Woldingham.
Lidl – Aldi
We (Jan and I) discovered the Lidl and Aldi shops when we were looking for (and eventually found) over a hundred commemorative mugs in the summer for the Children’s Party on Westmore Green on the Wills/Catherine royal wedding day, and what a place of “goodies” these German companies turned out to be. The “boys toys” they have on offer were made in their home country and were excellent things to buy, mostly very reasonable priced. Amongst many items I bought included a new Workzone electric soldering iron and used it for one day in my workshop that has signs attached outside listing “Danger Live Wires”.

Talking about the Germans reminds me of an annual visit Jan and I make to “Winter Wonderland” at Hyde Park in London at Christmas time, which is full of German cheer. It has a wonderful atmosphere with loads of different things to buy, and food and drink to enjoy. There is even a packed ice-skating rink there as well and lots of good oompah music to set the scene. The place always sets me up for that Christmas spirit and all you need to do to fully enjoy it all is to wrap up warm with thermals and a scarf, and you are all set to enjoy the “goings on”.

And Another Thing - The Christmas Tea Dance Social
We started running the Ballroom Dances over 7 years ago once a month at the Village Hall on a Wednesday afternoon and soon we had a nice lot of regular dancers coming to enjoy some nice music that brought back memories for most of the people. With time, it got to be more than a dance because the people started making new friends and they wanted to catch up with the chat as to what had happened since they had met. I went to a doctor and discussed the fact that a lot of my dancers were not so young and was I “doing it right?”. It was suggested that I should have an hour of dancing and then have a break with some refreshments and then onto more dancing for the rest of the afternoon.

So I changed the name to Tea Dance Social and that title has remained ever since. After the tea break we have a small quiz and a raffle, both with prizes. Over the years we have had some people leave us and I’m glad to say we have had others come along to replace the vacancies. Some of them that did leave have returned and have been welcomed back because they were missed by their friends, and what fun they are. Last month we had a visit from the BBC’s team of “Strictly Dancing - It Takes Two” and we were recorded for inclusion in a later programme. At the end of the year we have a special Christmas Tea Dance Social, which means that you are greeted with a glass (or two) of Sherry and your table has all sorts of nibbles including crisps, nuts, savoury straws, chocolates and crackers. All of that comes with warmed up mince pies and cream and as much tea/coffee as you can drink. One thing that is promised and that is you will have a great laugh and get some good exercise as well. If you fancy coming along to a fun afternoon, we will be there at the Village Hall on Wednesday December 7 from 2.15 – 4.55pm and I promise you’ll get a bit of Christmas spirit.

Dave Bishop
CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Set by
Joan Gresham

Clues

Across
1 Penny takes umbrage at gifts (8)
4 Georgia has knowledge a-plenty (6)
7 Laxative for racegoing sailors? (6,5)
9 You might visit here over Xmas to go on the piste (4)
10 Noble people in Upper House with loo (5,3,6)
11 Send back do-it-yourself food - language? (7)
13 Adoring letter contains lock of hair (7)
15 Pub drink hides a good buy (7)
18 Starts to introduce new facts albeit never to small toddlers (7)
21 Practice with clothes on (5,9)
23 Last word in Apha males (4)
24 Eddie Cambell initially joins manic race late. Step on it (10)
25 United Nations regret about Tuesday 1st is false (6)
26 Bean stem moves underground (8)

Down
1 The King’s surname (7)
2 Old film “Simple Addition” (4,5)
3 Coach retinue (5)
4 Joke on radio made by Indian, say, leads to development (9)
5 Males of 10 are a doing this in the Xmas song (7)
6 In the outskirts of Rome I mail reply (7)
8 Graduates go to first class African tribe (5)
12 Orderly on board (9)
14 P.E. scandal’s shattered work (9)
16 Sailor gets to con people’s corporation (7)
17 On the other side grass is proverbially this (7)
19 Iron clad stuff is to blame (5)
20 A sticker (not in red) (7)
22 Animal that’s good for a laugh (5)

Solution to Crossword
In November magazine

Across

Down

Prize of £5 voucher for use in Linda’s Stores or the Greengrocers to the first correct entry opened on 16 December. Please drop in your entry to Linda’s Stores or send to Bob David, The Briars, Ninehams Road, Tatsfield, TN16 2AN.
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

There was a good turnout of the Society’s members at its AGM at the Village Hall on Tuesday 8th November. Chair, Teresa Watts, gave an overview of the year’s events and presented the annual accounts and also reported on the development of the allotment site and the successful bids for funds. The committee was duly elected in and we warmly welcomed a new member, Georgina Westerman, on board.

Our speaker, Peter Jones, a volunteer with the National Trust, was introduced to give us a slideshow and talk on the year at Chartwell. At this time of year, Chartwell is ‘put to bed’ with all the small items painstakingly wrapped in acid-free tissue and all the furniture covered with sheets. A team of people deep clean the house and all the brass, silver and bronze is polished and the books dusted off.

During his period in office, Winston Churchill yearned for a home in the country and Chartwell with its stunning, far reaching views of the Weald captivated him. The house had not been lived in for several years and rhododendrons had taken over the grounds so it needed quite an amount of investment. Unfortunately he could not afford the 800 acre farm estate.

Following the death of a cousin who had a property, Winston came into some money and together with an advance from a publisher to write about the war, he managed to buy Chartwell. It is said it took 10 days for him to pluck up the courage to tell his wife, Clementine. A trade off was that he built her the extension she wanted, the East wing, and in 1924 they moved in.

Having been an apprentice in the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers, Winston was happy building walls and he made a playhouse in the garden. In the gardens there are lots of seats commemorating election victories and there is a studio displaying his paintings.

Following a visit to the Chelsea Flower Show they decided to make use of the natural spring near the house to form the lakes and they had the dining room floors raised in the house so that they had a better view of them.

Winston earned most of his money writing but during the wars years, he fell into debt and with the large cost of maintaining the house, they decided to build a new more modern home. An anonymous syndicate of friends heard of this and bought Chartwell and gave it to the National Trust on the proviso that he should live out his days there.

Chartwell is now regarded as a shrine to his memory and receives thousands of visitors eager to learn more about one of England’s legendary characters. Our thanks go to Peter Jones for delivering an interesting and often humorous insight into Churchill and his home.

Rosie Fuller
NOT SO YOUNG CLUB

The meeting on the 8th November was quite low on members. We had a Quiz and George Shaw won first prize. Another very pleasant afternoon. We all learned a few facts and we thank Enid Garrard for compiling a good questionnaire.

Next month we have our Christmas lunch, which is to be held on Saturday, 10th December. Members please remember - 1.30 for 2 pm.

We hope the Christmas Fair helped us with funds and that you remembered to bring something for the raffle. If not, don't forget the Christmas party raffle!

Babs Heffernon (Tel: 540602)

RAMBLERS

We have two very different walks this month – one nearby starting in Biggin Hill and the other near the picturesque Bewl Water. Details are below. Both should take about three hours. Everyone is welcome including dogs and their owners. Just turn up or contact one of us if you would like more information.

Date       Sunday, 4th December
Meet       10.30 am at the Recreation Ground, Church Road, Biggin Hill
           (Map ref: TQ420590)
Walk       5½ miles, 3 hours, to Downe via North End, Downe,
           with one short steep hill.
Leader     Jean and Dudley Turner

Date       Sunday, 18th December
Meet       11 am at Rosemary Lane, near Bewl Water (park where the
           lane runs alongside the reservoir). (Map ref: TQ700320)
Walk       5 miles, 3 hours, stopping at The Bull, Ticehurst for lunch
Leader     Jean and Dudley Turner

Angela and Roger Sawyers (Tel: 577434)

???? QUIZ NIGHT.......????

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French and English Gardens was the title of the talk given by Mr Hilary Newman on 1st November. He was a college lecturer in horticulture until his retirement and is an enthusiastic photographer, particularly of plants as one might expect. He came with two cas- settes of slides and began with the first of the fifteen French gardens. These were mainly laid out in the 16/17th century though some were a bit younger. They were mainly formal with parterres and clipped box etc. and lots of fountains. He showed two or three English style woodland gardens which were created much later, but said they were “in the English style”. Also on show were some twenty one gardens from the British Isles and a few were formal – “in the French style”. At times it was a little difficult to follow where he was going as he flipped between French and English/Scottish. However, it was all very nice to see and some members expressed a wish to visit some of the gardens next year. Some of the Cornish ones were amazing.

Mr Newman spoke about the origins of some of the plants and reminded us that most of the garden plants we are used to seeing are not native. That was quite a sobering thought as we are so used to having so many beautiful flowers in our gardens.

In December, we have our Christmas Party on Tuesday, 6th. We are also engaging in lots of activities during the month as usual, including the Keep Fit on Mondays at 11 and the Pop-In on Wednesdays at 10 – 12. Our Darts team are due to play the first match of the tournament on December 2nd at Crockham Hill and the Craft club is having an all day meeting this month (November) with guests welcomed for a taster session. We will be busy baking for the Craft Fair stall and hope that it will be as well supported as usual.

The new time of 7.15 for 7.30 worked very well and almost everyone remembered. We will probably stick with that, certainly for the winter months at least. Watch this space.

Toni Holley

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1ST TATSFIELD SCOUTS

I can’t believe that another year is almost over and how many activities all the sections have undertaken and achieved. I know just how many badges all the young people have gained as I am constantly being nagged about the amount of sewing I am responsible for! I think some of the youngsters need to grow longer arms to fit all the badges on! The great programmes are the work of all the leaders and helpers who continue to provide fantastic opportunities for the young people and I would like to thank them all for their continued support and commitment over the past year.

All sections this year have opted to have end of term parties at the HQ as in the last two years the Scouts have ended up having their Christmas ‘do’ in February due to cancellations because of severe weather. So we will be decorating the hall, putting up the tree and filling our faces with festive food - there might be some crackers to pull too!

Graham and Heather Weeks are planning on taking a ‘step-back’ early on in the new year as work and personal commitments have meant that they have not been able to spend as much time as they would like with the Pack nights and paperwork over the past year and I hope to have some encouraging news on possible help in the coming months. The Cub section is such a vital part of the whole group and it is essential that we continue our success at Tatsfield which has been growing and growing over the past few years.

After a well-earned Christmas break all sections will return the week commencing Monday 9th January, but before that the Beavers and Cubs will be going to see the pantomime at the Barn Theatre Oxted, which this time is ‘Jack and the Beanstalk’. So we will all be booing and hissing the baddies and cheering on the good guys, a fabulously fun night if not a little noisy and a date in the diary that has become a seasonal favourite.

I would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year; whether you intend to have a quiet time or a huge family gathering I hope it is a joyful one and I will be letting you know what the group and all the sections have in store for 2012 – so watch this space!

Helen Clarke, Group Scout Leader (Tel: 01883 380742 Mobile: 07736 230068 Email: tatsfield.gsl@gmail.com)
DECEMBER NOTES

How many flowers will you be able to pick to adorn your festive table on Christmas Day? None? With a bit of thought and research you can have not just flower but scent too. Shrubs to try include Mahonia ‘Charity’, a large evergreen bush with ‘strings’ of bright yellow fragrant blooms any time from November to March; put it near a path or a door and where the afternoon sun will catch it for maximum scent. Try the winter Honeysuckle, a deciduous loose growing medium sized bush dotted with white single fragrant blooms from December to late February. This is an obliging plant that will train tight against a fence and again try and put it near a path and in the sun. Another obliging plant that will train on a wall or fence is the evergreen Daphne bholua ‘Jacqueline Posthill’; the fragrance is stunning, heavy and sweet any time from December to late February. You could of course also buy one of these for that gardener in the family who ‘has everything’!

My tiny winter violas are flowering freely and I expect them to carry on through the winter. I have planted some prepared Hyacinths and maybe they might be ready by Christmas Day or soon after. Tatsfield is a bit too high up and cool to allow our Winter Hellebore or Christmas Rose to flower in time, unless of course you have a sunny sheltered spot where they will grow big enough and form those lovely flower buds.

Last winter the snow and cold wind damaged a lot of conifers and some other evergreens, in particular where they are trained as a hedge. If it snows again please make sure that you go out and shake it off your plants as soon as possible to avoid the damage but make sure you don’t do it at night or very early in the morning because these plants are very important shelter for birds!

Have a great Christmas and remember that your house plants do not need anywhere near the amount of water you think they need – give them a bit of a holiday too!

Jon Allbutt (Tel:576481 Email:jon@jonallbutt.co.uk)

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