

Cuckfield Life

Inc. Brook St., Ansty & Staplefield

Local village talk,
by the village

Issue #2 : Dec/Jan 2013

Free



All the Christmas 'What's On'

page 22

Top Police job goes to local resident

page 12

Christmas canapés

page 18

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EDITORIAL

By David Tingley, Editor

Firstly, can I say **thank you** to all those who have given us feedback on our first issue. I'm pleased to say the overwhelming feeling appears to be that of support for what we are about, which is great as it means we are 'scratching where people itch'!

Secondly, it is very nearly **Christmas**, so there is plenty in this issue along that line. We have lots of information on **Christmas church services** on page 8 and 22. Over the page, Claire gives a short report on the popular **Annual Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch**.

Helly Eaton gives us some useful suggestions on how to **'green' up our Christmas** on page 16, and Jack gives us food for thought when it comes to **Christmas canapés** on page 18. Yum!

One thing that may have passed many by is the fact that the new **Police Crime Commissioner** for Sussex is Katy Bourne – who lives in this very Parish! We are very pleased that Katy has spared the time to give Cuckfield Life an interview. For most (if not all!) of what you would want to know about your PCC check out the article on page 12.

Elsewhere on the pages of this second issue there should be plenty of truly **local news** that has either happened or is coming up.

For instance, we caught up with some of the regulars at **The Wheatsheaf** who spent all of last month concentrating their efforts on crafting their facial hair to raise funds for the now legendary **November campaign**. And they've done a fantastic job. See page 11 for their current total.

Finally I would like to wish you a truly Happy Christmas. Do continue **getting in touch** with your stories, ideas, suggestions and photos. Send an email to Claire or me at <editor@cuckfieldlife.co.uk> or you can call the office on 01444 884115.

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We'd love to hear from groups, organisations and individuals about what's happening locally. Include a photo if you can. Email your stories to editor@cuckfieldlife.co.uk

Spa wins coveted award

The new Spa at Ockenden Manor Hotel has been named 'The Most Excellent Hotel Spa' at Condé Nast Johansens 2013 UK & Ireland Awards for Excellence.

The Spa, which opened last January, was created inside the estate's original 19th century walled garden and was designed to blend harmoniously with the surrounding Sussex landscape. The scheme includes six large rooftop spa suites, designed with large French windows to maximise the views of the South Downs.

Pontus Carminger, Managing Director of Historic Sussex Hotels, said: "I am really delighted that the Spa has been recognised by Condé Nast Johansens' guests and inspectors so soon after opening. This is testament to all the hard work everyone has put in to make the Spa work. Ockenden Manor is already known for its food, character and service – and now for the Spa as well."

The Condé Nast Johansens Awards are based on responses from guest nomination forms, guest survey reports and regional inspector reports drawn from the hotels featured in Condé Nast Johansens' most recent guides.

New restaurant and takeaway now open...

Last month saw the launch of a new Indian restaurant in Cuckfield. Spice Village is at 1 Ockenden Lane – the site of the former Cuckfield Tandoori, but is not connected with the previous occupant. Mofozzul Miah, Spice Village's owner from Burgess Hill, commented: "Many people believe this has just been closed for a refit but we are a completely separate business, having taken over the lease on the property last month."

The new offering is proud to provide contemporary Indian cuisine for diners in the 30-cover restaurant and is also available as an on-your-doorstep takeaway. Mofozzul has over 26 years' experience in the trade and says he's bringing truly authentic and traditional dishes to Cuckfield working with an award-winning chef. Spice Village is open seven days a week from 5.30pm and new customers get a complimentary first drink with their meal. They are also currently taking bookings for a special Christmas Day Lunch. You can book your table on 01444 441373.



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Senior Citizens get all the trimmings

Christmas came early for 100 elderly Cuckfield residents who enjoyed a three course festive lunch and entertainment in the Queens Hall.

The guests, many whom were chauffeured to the Hall from their homes, were treated to a traditional dinner complete with turkey, special Christmas dessert, mince pies and wine. Following lunch, crackers and a visit from Santa, the guests were treated to entertainment from the choir of Holy Trinity School, the Singing Allsorts and a singalong led by Tony Elphick.

Organised by the Independent State of Cuckfield (ISoC), the event was run by a dedicated team of volunteers led by Annie Rees.

The ISoC has been running the annual Christmas lunch for over 40 years and the event is not just popular with the elderly guests. "I've actually had to turn away people who want to help this year," said Annie. "It's such a lovely day that everyone wants to get involved! It kicks off Christmas for us all."

She added that floral decorations are provided each year from members of the Cuckfield Flower Club, while a team of students from Warden Park Academy help with welcoming guests and clearing up afterwards.

The event is open to all residents who reside in the village or have lived in Cuckfield and moved away. "It's a lovely opportunity for those who have moved away to come back and meet up with old friends," said Annie.

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The end of a year of celebration for School



This year Holy Trinity Primary School has been celebrating its 500 year anniversary.

The school celebrated with several events, including an exhibition at school for the children to see how education has changed over the years.

Past pupils and friends shared their memories at a reunion in November, which included a presentation exploring the history of the school which was founded in 1512 by Merchant Taylor Edmund Flower. The presentation was given by Jo Roche and Emma Cameron (former pupils and now mums at the school).

One of the highlights was a Procession and Service of Dedication at the Old School and Holy Trinity Church, when the whole school and staff processed with their banners depicting key events from the history of 500 years of learning in Cuckfield. They were greeted at the

church by The Right Reverend Mark Sowerby, the Bishop of Horsham and the wonderful peels of the Church bells. During the service staff and Governors affirmed their dedication to the pupils, school and learning in Cuckfield and the Lead Ambassadors led the prayers focusing on the school values.

Jo and Emma have created a book to celebrate and commemorate this amazing and historical anniversary.

The School 500 Anniversary book is now available from Photobox. The price is £45.99 + postage (£4.29 for 1). However, offers do come up regularly (the most recent would bring the price down to £33.59 + postage). Unfortunately any offers can only be applied if ordered by Jo and Emma as the book is their 'creations'. To place an order with Jo or find out more, email her at school500@btinternet.com

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Warden Park prize winners celebrate their successes

Former students, their parents and friends gathered at Warden Park recently to celebrate success in academic work, sport, the arts and contributions to the academy and wider community.

Head Teacher Steve Johnson had challenged the students to reach at least 500 national curriculum points (the equivalent of over 9 A grades at GCSE). A record 100 students were awarded for meeting his challenge, with 33 students gaining 600 points or more. Record breakers this year and winners of Warden Park's Westminster Cup for top achievement were Eleanor Ferguson and William Farrance. Eleanor gained 7 A* grades and 3 A grades at GCSE, an A in advanced maths and the National Diploma – a combination of successes unlikely to have been equalled anywhere else in Sussex.

Following the award of almost 200 prizes, Steve Johnson concluded the evening quoting Cicero to encourage all prizewinners to share their knowledge and skills with the wider community for the good of all.

The annual event had been moved into the academy's sports centre this year to accommodate the record number of students being recognized for their success. Former Head Boy Sakif Zafar was the 2012 winner of the prestigious Warden Park Cup for academic success and 'admirable personal qualities', while former Head Girl Emily Marples and Deputy Head Boy Daniel Mays shared the Head Teacher's Cup for their leadership skills.



Prizewinners: Eleanor Love, Daisy Martin, Lauren Hersey and Sophia Bolton

Stephen Rusling carried off the Brian Webb Cup as best all-rounder, recognising his achievements in sport and drama as well as for academic excellence.

Over 80 other pupils were also presented with awards for special achievement.

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Help where it's needed

FROM THE MAYOR'S TABLE

By Lindy Elphick

I am delighted to have been asked by Cuckfield Life to write a Mayoral Column. I see this magazine as a great vehicle for the Independent State of Cuckfield to get in touch with the community.

Never have I lived anywhere where so many people are prepared to take responsibility and get on with organizing and helping clubs, associations and events. Residents can keep abreast of what is going on locally through this magazine, cuckfield.org, village notice boards or newsletters – that way you can pick and choose which events to support. The brilliant thing is there is a wonderful variety to choose from.

This year's mayoral campaign raised over £11K. and we are now looking at how this can be put to the best use in the community. All the groups and clubs taking part in the procession will receive £250, plus cash for 1st, 2nd and 3rd floats.

Historically it has not been that amount, but due to the excellent fund raising this year and last, the ISOC has allocated extra funds which they hope will entice clubs to take part next year. Don't worry if you can't find a trailer to decorate, as wheel-barrows, prams, and bikes will be welcomed - so get your thinking caps on now!

The ISOC fund is for village people in need of support and in recent years it has supported several young people with an Olympic target. However, the fund is also there for the community – do you know of someone who could do with some help financially? Maybe an older person whose house needs a health check or a more efficient heater? Maybe a young family struggling in these difficult times? It is very easy for us to overlook those in need on our doorstep in our affluent community but I know that there are residents who may be finding it difficult to put a meal on the table for their family at the end of each month. If you know someone who needs help, contact Jim Ayling (Chairman of ISOC) at the White Harte pub – 01444 415434.

One of the major things in the ISOC calendar is the Senior Citizens Christmas lunch – see page 5. A team led by Annie Rees and Lesley Horne ensured that many senior citizens from our community got together to enjoy a wonderfully cooked meal and entertainment.

One plug I must make is for www.cuckfield.org – sign up now if you have not done so. It keeps you up to date and in touch with almost everything that is going on in the village.

That is it for now but I will be writing again in the next issue to tell you about how much fun it is being mayor and how you could run for election in 2013. I am even hoping to get a new hat made for the role!

Have a wonderful festive season and a very Happy New Year to you all.



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Pub locals get behind Movember

They're fan'tash'tic! Customers and staff at The Wheatsheaf pub have ditched their razors, braved the bristle and grown moustaches for charity.

Throughout last month the team of 26 have been collecting sponsors from their friends, families and fellow drinkers to reach a hair-raising £5,000 for the Movember campaign.

After careful pruning, shaping and grooming, the men were finally allowed to shave off their stubble on 1st December after their one-month battle for the top tache.

The Movember Campaign aims to raise vital funds and awareness of men's health, specifically testicular and prostate cancer.

Prostate cancer has now replaced lung cancer as the most common form of cancer in men, while incidents of testicular cancer are increasing dramatically in men aged 15 to 45.

The Wheatsheaf team was led by landlords Nik Cobley and Rob Helliwell. "At first there were only a few of us but as the moustaches grew, so did the team and we ended up with 26," said Rob. "We all have our own reasons for taking part but overall it's really important to raise awareness of men's cancers."

He added that the rules were strict – no joining of the moustache to the sideburns (that's a beard!) or letting the handlebars connect to the chin (that's a goatee!).

Posters on the pub walls showed images of different styles of tache, giving inspiration to those taking part.

"We've all had great fun – some have fared better than others but everyone has stuck with it to the end," said Rob. "Growing was easy – the hard part was getting people to give us their money! I'd like to thank everyone who has donated money and local businesses who gave prizes for our 'wheel of fortune' raffle."

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Katy Bourne

VILLAGE PEOPLE

Congratulations to Katy Bourne who has become the first ever Police and Crime Commissioner for Sussex. Katy, who represents Cuckfield on Mid Sussex District Council, lives in Ansty with her husband Kevin and two grown up sons. We caught up with Katy during her first week in the job to find out what her new role could mean for Cuckfield.

By Claire Cooper

Firstly, congratulations on becoming the first Police and Crime Commissioner for Sussex! It's good to know that Mid Sussex, and in particular the villages of Cuckfield and Ansty, will be well represented!

Can you tell us a little about your role as a Mid Sussex District Councillor and how this has helped prepare you for your new challenge?

As a Councillor talking to local people and listening to their views is vital, and this experience is something I can bring to the role of Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC).

Will you now be standing down to concentrate on your new role?

I will stand down early next year and an election to appoint a replacement will be held in May alongside the county election. I am not claiming expenses as a Mid Sussex District Councillor.

How do your sons feel about their mum becoming the new Police and Crime Commissioner?

They are very proud – and on their best behaviour! They know I care passionately about the community and about being a voice for local people. I've lived in Sussex all my life and I want my sons to do the same; to raise their families here and be safe.

How long have you lived in Ansty and what do you enjoy most about village life?

I have lived in Ansty for 11 years and enjoy being part of a close community.

Do you feel safe living in a rural area and what do you consider are the main challenges faced for policing of villages?

It's easy to feel remote when living in a rural area, so I will make sure rural areas get a fair share of the resources being allocated.

I want to encourage more community-based solutions. Schemes such as Farm Watch, in which people in rural areas are encouraged to share information and take crime reduction measures. These schemes can play a key role in helping residents feel protected.



The return of the 'village bobby' would be widely welcomed by most people, but realistically this is probably an impossible dream. How do you see the future of neighbourhood policing and how would you like to see it resourced?

I intend to increase the number of Special Constables to enhance the excellent work done by Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and reconnect the public with their 'local Bobby'.

Special Constables are volunteers who have the power of arrest and increasing their number is essential to improve police visibility and bring diversity to frontline neighbourhood policing.

PCSOs provide a vital back up for police officers. Would you like to see their role expanded and PCSOs given more powers?

PCSOs have recently been awarded stronger powers and I support the vital work they do in our communities. I know that many residents are very appreciative of the work they carry out.

You say that you will be putting the victim at the heart of policing. Does this mean putting more emphasis on the effects of crime?

My role as PCC is to bring together organisations like Sussex Police, local authorities, Community Safety

Partnerships and victims' services to make sure victims of crime are kept fully informed throughout the entire process of crime resolution. I will also be funding services to help those who are affected by crime.

Have you ever been a victim of crime?

I had my handbag stolen several years ago. It contained an item of jewellery that my father, then deceased, had given to my mother on her 21st birthday. She had subsequently given it to me on my 21st. The loss of such a sentimental item was very difficult – I can never replace that.

What role, if any, do you see residents associations and community groups playing in the prevention and solving of crime in our villages?

The police can't tackle antisocial behaviour on their own and it's important we support the work they do in our communities. I will be encouraging residents associations and community groups to play their part.

Streetwatch is a new scheme being trialled in Sussex. It is one way for people to play an organised role in their area, with training provided by Sussex Police. It has been shown to reduce levels of antisocial behaviour and other criminal activity in neighbourhoods.

How will you seek to reassure residents that crime committed in rural areas will be given the same priority as that in towns?

I was elected with a manifesto pledge to ensure a crime in a rural area is taken as seriously as a crime in an urban area. I want people from rural communities represented on Community Safety Partnerships and for police plans to be 'rural proofed'.

As a parent, are you concerned about drug use among young people and the widespread availability? How should this be tackled – by wider education or tougher penalties?

All too often large numbers of crimes are committed by a small number of people and, frequently, the common denominator is drugs. I will give the police strong support to target the drug dealers and organised crime networks that bring misery to our streets. I will also work with other agencies to fund proven initiatives that help addicts, often themselves victims, give up their drug dependency permanently, as well as working with health authorities, schools, victims and charities to ensure we never stop looking for innovative ways of educating residents about the dangers of drugs.

How will you tackle low morale among police officers, with budgets being cut year on year?

I have a great deal of sympathy for Sussex police staff and officers, who are experiencing enormous change. I will be meeting all staff and officers over the next few months at their early turn meetings. I am here to support them.

How would you like to be remembered at the end of your 4 year term?

My success as PCC will depend on my understanding of Sussex and its residents, and shaping the police force accordingly. I want residents to know I am an accessible Commissioner and a strong voice for local people in the fight against crime, and I look forward to being re-elected on this promise.

FOOT NOTE BY KATY:

"As your PCC I want to hear your views and experiences of policing and crime in Sussex. It is important that I stay connected with the people and communities I serve.

Please visit www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk and find out how you can have your say or email me at [<spcc@sussex-pcc.gov.uk>](mailto:spcc@sussex-pcc.gov.uk)"

Live local, buy local.

(And tell them you saw the advertisement in Cuckfield Life.)

Local children perform with International Ballet Company in Sussex



Photo by Suzanne Gielgud

Local Sussex-based pupils from the Gielgud Academy of Performing Arts (GAPA) appeared with the Vienna Festival Ballet Company in November on several dates of their UK Tour. Director Peter Mallek, pictured here with the GAPA pupils and the Principal couple of Vienna Festival Ballet, danced in all major ballet Companies worldwide and partnered many leading ladies including Dame Margot Fonteyn. He commented, "I was very impressed with the children from the Gielgud Academy. They were all so well behaved and professional – I shall be keeping an eye out for them in years to come when I audition for new dancers for the Company."

The eight lucky GAPA pupils appeared as dolls in Dr Coppelius workshop scene in Act 2 of the ballet Coppelia during their performances in East Grinstead at the Chequer Mead Theatre and in Worthing at the Pavillion Theatre. Both GAPA principals, Suzanne and Piers Gielgud, previously danced with the Vienna Festival Ballet during their professional ballet careers, which created the link between the school and the Company.

Pierre Bruton from Lindfield said "Being on stage with these dancers and looking out into the audience made me feel as if I was looking into my future. I now know that I definitely want to perform when I'm older and I'm going to work as hard as I can to achieve that." Owen, aged 11, from Cuckfield added "It was awesome!"

For more details about the Gielgud Academy go to www.gielgudacademy.co.uk.

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Motivation is what you need...

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

By David Tingley

It is often said that hard work pays off. Sadly, it's not a motto that anyone has ever applied to my personal fitness but Maxine Hayes is certainly a living testimony to it.

Maxine grew up locally and went to school in Burgess Hill. Her story is a familiar one in many respects. She worked as a web designer, met someone and became pregnant. By the time she gave birth to her son she was very overweight and actually quite unhappy. Just a short time before she'd enjoyed being 10 stone, running regularly and going out with friends. Had her life changed forever?

Her partner, recognising her unhappiness, presented Maxine with a year's gym membership - a gift that was to affect her life significantly.

Within ten months of joining the gym she had reached her target weight - losing an amazing 6.5 stone! But she was still enjoying it. Maxine had, by this time, used the services of a personal trainer to help her work out and had reaped the rewards of such accountability and motivation.

At this point Maxine found herself as a single parent but wasn't comfortable with conforming to the broad stereotype that some have of people in her position. She was also scared to go back to her sedentary desk job, having already made such a shift in her own health, so she made a bold decision. Maxine declined the Beauty Therapy course and resitting GCSEs placement offered by the Government (she got straight As when she was 16!). Instead she enrolled at Collyer's College in Horsham to train as a fitness instructor.

Thus began a steady flow of learning over the next two years which she crammed into evenings and weekends mostly, whilst still looking after her son. Maxine worked part time as an apprentice gym instructor at Alexander House Hotel, while studying for her Level 3 Advanced personal trainer qualification, which she attained in June this year.

And this is where the new story begins. Maxine helped her friends with their fitness at first but, since the

"Maxine is an amazing motivator. I've never laughed so much in a fitness class before!"

Natalie Banbury, Haywards Heath

summer, the business has gathered pace organically. Potential Personal Training was born.

Maxine now sees around 40 clients a week in a mixture of settings; boxing classes, one on one sessions and one hour bootcamps. She even runs special group training sessions for bridal parties who want to shed some weight before the big day! "It's not only about BMI and weighing less," Maxine comments. "Many will lose inches before going down on the scales. I talk to clients about overall diet too, but I'm not overly strict. We all like going out and having a nice meal sometimes. My style is about real life and my own story reflects this."

Natalie Banbury from Haywards Heath has lost three stone since she started with Potential PT in June. "Maxine is an amazing motivator. I've never laughed so much in a fitness class before I met her!" In addition to the weight loss, Natalie says that there is something else that she gets from it too, "Just knowing that I am so much fitter than I was gives me greater confidence in talking to people. Something that I thought I had lost forever."

Maxine runs bootcamps in nearby Lindfield and works with clients across the local area. Personal Training starts from as little as £8 per month and she has a membership package for just £35 per month. Call Maxine at Potential PT on 07917 852989.

The gift dilemma

VILLAGE GREEN

by Helly Eaton, Cuckfield Local

Winter is a pretty good time to be in Cuckfield. The village is stunning in snow and even looks cosy when it's grey and muddy. With the festive season and Christmas lights bringing brightness and colour to the darkest days, we can probably be positive for a little while longer.

It can be a bit of a dilemma in the gift-giving season to find more and more goodies to buy for our nearest and dearest. Not to mention getting the party clothes out of mothballs (maybe that's just me...). Statistics show there are approx 2.4 billion pieces of women's clothing lying unworn for an entire 12 months and that the average UK woman spends nearly £13,000 on clothes she will never wear in a lifetime (www.joinedupliving.com). Scary stuff.

It seems we just buy too much. So, to be kind to the planet and ourselves, we could maybe start by buying less. And also choosing the best quality we can afford, so it lasts longer. Then if we really value what we have, we could repair and restore our clothes when they need help, or at least recycle them rather than tossing them in the bin.

Local is the new chic – few of us would want to knowingly support sweatshops in the Third World where workers, including children, are paid a pittance and slave away in often toxic conditions. We're lucky here in Cuckfield that many of our shops sell stylish, good clothes, so buying locally can be a practical option. Or how about 'swishing' – if you're bored with something in your cupboard you could swap it with something you fancy from someone else. Swishing parties are fun, practical and popular.

Being 'eco-friendly' over Christmas and New Year doesn't have to be dreary or hard work. Making your own gifts or giving your 'time' are great ways to give present pleasure. Maybe you could offer your babysitting or gardening skills, or make edible gifts such as cakes or cookies, fudge or truffles, jams or chutneys.

And speaking of feasting, think 'food metres' instead of 'food miles' and buy as much of your produce as you can from our local suppliers. We're blessed in Sussex with the best of meats, veggies, breads, sauces, drinks and just about everything else you could wish for. Cuckfield Local's Food Directory should help you find everything you're after – if you don't have a copy, go to the website www.cuckfieldlocal.wordpress.co.uk and follow the link to 'local market/food directory'.

Wrapping gifts can be creative too. Instead of buying loads of paper, how about trying some more unusual ideas such as wrapping presents in beautiful scraps of fabric, bags that can be reused or painting your own designs on recycled paper? When you start thinking along these lines the variations are endless.

So, have fun with the festivities and enjoy our winter wonderland, whatever the weather brings...



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Christmas nibbles

ON YOUR TABLE

Marinated Salmon and Pickled Cucumber

A side of good quality salmon

Rock salt (3 handfuls)

Zest of 2 lemons

Herb stalks (chopped)

1 cucumber

250ml white wine vinegar

50g salt

150g sugar

NB: You need to start preparing the salmon the day before serving

For the salmon, mix the zest, rock salt and chopped herb stalks, rub into the salmon and leave to marinate for 24 hours. After 24 hours place the salmon under running water and wash, then remove and dry.

For the dressing, mix together the vinegar, salt and sugar with 200ml of water. Then finely slice the cucumber at an angle to get long slices and add to the vinegar.

To serve, slice small squares of salmon and place on top of the end of a slice of cucumber then fold the cucumber over and place a cocktail stick through it.



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If you're holding a drinks party over Christmas and the New Year and looking for canapés that are easy to make but will impress your guests, then Ockenden Manor trainee chef Jack Armstrong shares a few ideas...

Cheese Gougères

4 tbsp butter
 1/4 cup milk and extra for brushing
 1/2 tsp each salt and ground white pepper
 65g all-purpose flour, sifted
 1/8 tsp baking powder
 2 eggs
 45g grated Gruyère plus extra for garnish

Bring the butter, milk, 1/4 cup water, salt, and pepper to the boil. Remove from the heat and add the flour and baking powder. Stir well and return to medium heat. Cook, stirring continuously, until the mixture pulls away from the sides of the pan and forms a ball.

Place the cheese into the mixture, stir until cool to the touch and beat in eggs with a wooden spoon. Transfer to a pastry bag and pipe in 1-inch mounds on a tray lined with silicon paper. Brush with milk and sprinkle with cheese and sea salt.

Bake for 10 to 15 minutes at 150°C gas mark 3 until golden brown.

Anchovy sticks and Cheese straws

Ready roll puff pastry (1 packet)
 Anchovies (1 tin)
 200g grated Parmesan
 2 eggs for egg wash

For the anchovy sticks roll out a quarter of the puff pastry to about 3mm thick, then egg wash all over. In lines of 3 or 4 make lines of anchovies the length of the sheets (the anchovies should overlap each other slightly to keep a constant thickness).

Now roll out another quarter of pastry to the same thickness as before and place over the anchovies. Push the sheet down between the anchovies so it seals them in, then cut the sheet between every third line of anchovies.

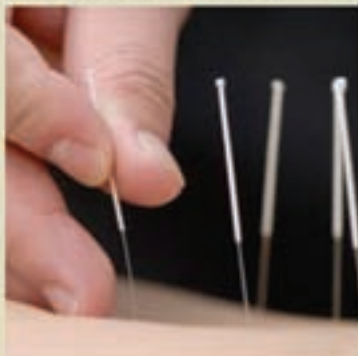
Chill or freeze the sheets as this will make them easier to cut later.

Place the sheets on a chopping board and (if frozen, allow to warm slightly) then taking a sharp knife make the sticks by slicing about 3mm thick. Place on a baking sheet, wide side down, and cook at 180°C for 7 minutes, then turn and cook for a further 5 minutes. Allow to cool and serve.

For the cheese straws roll the puff pastry out to about 3mm thick. Once rolled, brush off all the flour and egg wash the whole sheet. Sprinkle the grated Parmesan all over and, using a rolling pin, lightly roll over to compress the Parmesan very slightly. Now cut to desired size, cook at 180°C for 8 minutes, turn the whole baking sheet and carry on cooking until golden brown.

Acupuncture - an holistic way to health

The use of acupuncture as a treatment has been documented over several thousand years. The core belief is that the balance of energy within the body relates to an individual's health and acupuncture can influence this flow. Lesley Reed has been treating people with acupuncture for a variety of symptoms over the last two years. She has a BSc (Hons) degree in acupuncture and is a full member of the British Acupuncture Council (BAcC), abiding by their strict code of practice and hygiene. She also has additional qualifications in massage and reflexology.



Incorporating Traditional Chinese Medicine with Five Element and Stems and Branches theory into her acupuncture treatments, Lesley has been particularly recommended by others for her reassuring, calm manner and her professionalism - especially when dealing with nervous clients or those with special needs.



Lesley has experience in using acupuncture to treat many conditions, but she has a special interest in pain management, panic/anxiety, fertility and facial revitalisation acupuncture.

Appointments are available from 8am to 8pm Monday to Saturday at The Clinic at Borde Hill and home visits can be arranged. For new patients a free 15 min phone consultation is offered. Please call 07808 248772 or email lesley@reedacupuncture.co.uk.

My life after the Police

By Neil Sadler

The distinguished gentleman stood to deliver his vote of thanks at the end of my talk. "I am, no doubt, the only person in this room who has seen Neil totally naked!" said the man, to looks of surprise from the audience.

He qualified his comments very quickly by explaining that he had actually been my family doctor for over twenty years!

Retiring from Sussex Police in 2008 after thirty years, I was really looking forward to working on a casual basis as a civilian in police recruitment. Sadly the 2010 general election put paid to that idea, as all recruitment ground to a sudden halt.

I soon realised that I needed something to occupy my days (and give my long suffering wife, Julie, a break!). I'd spent some time in national police training, so the thought gradually emerged of developing a variety of talks, as most people seem to enjoy "cops and robber" stories.

Little did I know that in order to be able to talk to Women's Institutes I needed to attend and pass an audition, not dissimilar from being on X Factor. Attending my first audition in Polegate village hall near Eastbourne, I had assumed there would be a handful of ladies sitting behind a trestle table. I was amazed to find 130 ladies sitting in rows awaiting my "sample performance". I'd been allocated the slot just before lunch...hence there were very few questions at the end... lunch awaited!

Wind the clock forward eighteen months and, fortunately, I have now been accepted by four separate county WIs. I have been lucky to receive many bookings from a wide variety of organisations, from as far afield as Andover in Hampshire to Dartford in Kent.

I've now developed a total of four talks (three police related). The first one is called "A policeman's lot... can be quite an interesting one". The fourth one is titled "Gongoozling for beginners" and is a light hearted "cruise" through some of the most beautiful countryside in the UK, touching on the practicalities of living aboard a canal narrowboat....especially when things don't go exactly to plan!

What I really enjoy is meeting nice people, in nice places who actually want to see me.....unlike many times over thirty years' police service. Venues have been as diverse as a south London Synagogue, a Sussex church and a Unitarian church Meeting House, not to mention numerous village halls. At one such hall I was to be followed two days later by a lady whose talk was entitled "My life as a Playboy bunny-girl!"...variety is certainly the spice of life in that village.

The feedback sheets I give out to the various groups and the comments I receive often provide me with a smile. Examples have included: "Very well received: one of our members who regularly falls asleep during talks did not do so on this occasion!" and "...short, sharp stories, kept their attention (the first time they have kept so quiet!) I look forward to hearing you again."

Finally, people never cease to surprise me when they come up and speak to me at the end of a talk. From the lady who told me her great grandfather was a mounted policeman at the Great Exhibition of 1851 to the elderly gentleman who came and gave me his somewhat forthright views about Margaret Thatcher and her attitude to the miners strike in 1984.

As I said....I am still meeting some interesting people. Contact Neil via www.neilsadler.webs.com

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Olympic success story in Cuckfield

By Kate Trotman

What better way to round up Olympic year than by meeting a real Olympian? On a Saturday last month Cuckfield Baptist Church invited Richard Chambers, silver medallist in the men's lightweight coxless fours at London 2012, to speak about his sporting success, his life before the Olympics and his Christian faith.

All ages were welcome and it was good to see that the evening appealed to young and older alike. Several were in competitive spirit on the rowing machines; after all there's nothing like a challenge in front of a celebrity! A quiz provided some warm-up entertainment for all, whatever their level of fitness, and Richard Chambers proved to be a man of the people as he chatted with everyone.

Richard said that rowing didn't become his main sport until well into his teens but success propelled him into world class events and in recent years life has been completely dominated by training for international supremacy and the ultimate Olympic goal. Hearing about the gruelling training regime, time away from his wife and one-year old son and the constant need to outperform the competition was enough to shake reality into any aspiring athlete and yet inspire them too.

So what about the greatest moment for him? This year it has to be that silver medal, mixed with the natural disappointment of not winning gold. Every athlete faces the huge emotions of success and failure, so how is faith relevant? Richard said it is sometimes hard to maintain regular Bible reading and prayer when his life is so dominated by training. Yet having come to trust in Jesus as a teenager, he knows that God is in his life today and has the sure hope of heaven when this life is over; promises that will outlast every Olympic dream.




Above: One of the church leadership team Mark Pibworth with Richard Chambers. Below: Church Pastor David Sprouse interviewing Richard.



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AT THE VILLAGE HALLS

- 14th Dec – Queens Hall
Cuckfield Crafts and Market
Monthly market. Friday mornings
9.30am-1.00pm.
- 21st Dec – Queens Hall
The Rain or Shine Theatre Company perform
The Wind in the Willows at 7.30pm
Kenneth Grahame's classic story is for adults and children alike. Witness and hear the tale of Mole, Ratty, Badger, Otter and the naughty, automobile loving Mr Toad to the resounding sound of Poop-poop. In this festive adaptation the five friends come together at an anniversary party to act out and relive their adventures, taking on the roles of friends and foe alike, culminating in the liberation of Toad Hall from the dastardly weasels of the Wild Wood. A family show suitable for everyone aged 6 to 106.
Tickets £8 adults and £5 children
For tickets phone The Queen's Hall on 01444 451610 or the Rain or Shine tour box office on 08456 440931
- 25th Jan – Queens Hall
NSPCC Burns Night Dance & Supper
A wonderful night celebrating the birthday of Robert Burns. Ceilidh Dancing to local band Galleon's Leap, who will bring a caller to help keep things in order. Haggis supper with dessert and vegetarian option. Address to the haggis and our own local piper. There will be a pay bar and raffle. Tickets £20 each or £150 for a table of 8. Available from Wealden Stores or Cuckfield Candy Store.
Email: hheathnspcc@btinternet.com for more information. Time: 7pm - 11.30pm

AND ELSEWHERE

- 16th Dec – **Family Carol Service**
Cuckfield Baptist Church at 3.30pm
- 23rd Dec – **Service of Lessons & Carols**
Holy Trinity Church at 6pm
- 23rd Dec – **Carols by Candlelight Service**
Cuckfield Baptist Church at 6.30pm
- 24th Dec – **Crib Services** at 2.30 & 4.30pm
Holy Trinity Church. Please ask for free tickets in advance
- 24th Dec – **Stable Service** at 4.30pm
The Old School. Please ask for free tickets in advance
- 24th Dec – **Midnight Service**
Holy Trinity Church at 11.15pm
- 25th Dec – **Christmas Day Service**
Cuckfield Baptist Church at 10.30am
- 25th Dec – **Christmas Day Holy Communion**
Holy Trinity Church at 9.45am
- 31st Dec – **Mid Sussex Ramblers Haywards Heath Circular**. 4 miles. Part of the Festival of Winter Walks. Meet at Haywards Heath Railway Station Forecourt at 2pm. Contact 01444 483860
- 1st Jan – **Mid Sussex Ramblers New Year's Day walk**. 3 miles. Meet at Ditchling Village Hall car park 11am. Part of the Festival of Winter Walks. Contact 01273 844840
- 4th Jan – **Sussex Mineral and Lapidary Society Monthly meeting**. Talk by David Aubrey Jones, 'Minerals from Devonshire'. Redwood Centre, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath. 7.30 for 8pm. Contact: 01444 483041 www.smls.org.uk
- 5th Jan – **Mid Sussex Ramblers Lewes Circular**. Festival of Winter Walks, 5.5 miles. Meet at Cliffe Bridge, Lewes at 10am. Contact: 07709 961039

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