

# Cuckfield *Life*

Inc. Brook St, Ansty & Staplefield

Local village talk,  
by the village

Issue #16 : Feb/Mar '14

Free



We remember first Cuckfield Mayor

page 20

Hello to new head teacher

page 16

European Association newsletter

page 26



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## EDITORIAL

By David Tingley, Editor

Welcome to a great month with lots to talk about!

Firstly I would like to say thank you to some of our contributors. It's great to have local school boy **Luke Mitchell** interview his new head teacher, **Jonathan Morris**, who features in Village People on **page 16**. Luke gets to grips with what he's excited about for the future of Warden Park.

On **page 20** we celebrate the life of the first mayor of the Independent State of Cuckfield, **Joe Mitchell**. Kate Fleming uncovers the fascinating story of his life and shares it with us. It is always such a treat to read about such characters in the village.

Bringing it up to date with the current mayor, **Mike Schlup** gives us a real insight into exactly how the **money raised** in the last mayoral elections was spent. Read it for yourself on **page 17**.

The High Street here still appears to be bucking the national trend by not having empty shops but managing to encourage new businesses in on a regular basis. I know of a number of changes that are yet to take place, but right now we can welcome **Willow** childrens wear, next door to the Post Office, which opened at the beginning of the month. And, further up the road, the new owners of **The Rose & Crown**, Mark & Simon Dennis, are putting the final touches to the refit of the pub.

**Caroline Whiteman** gives us the keys to the most delicious curry in her recipe on **page 24**. We know how much you love to read about food and we are very grateful to Caroline for continuing to share her knowledge with us.

I will leave you with a plea for your **photos of the village**. New angles, traditional, alternative, rain or shine – we love to have a good stock of images for the cover. Plus if it gets used we will send you a M&S gift card. Do get in touch. Send yours in to **photo@cuckfieldlife.co.uk**

Issue #16 – Feb/Mar 2014 –  
3,200 copies printed

Next magazine copydate:  
28th February 2014

Next magazine published:  
15th March 2014

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Disclaimer: The opinions expressed within the magazine are of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the editors. Whilst the editors welcome contributions & photographs, this is on the understanding that there is no obligation to include them and that the item may be edited & that there is no breach of copyright. Neither the editors nor the publisher accept any liability in respect of the content of any article, photo or advertisement.

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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](mailto:editor@cuckfieldlife.co.uk)

## FREE Golf Experience sessions

Young people in Cuckfield have the chance join a unique golf coaching programme on their doorstep!

Cuckfield Golf Centre is offering 12 youngsters, aged between 11 and 16, the chance to take part in a series of Golf Experience sessions designed to introduce them to the basics of golf and the skills they need to hit the course straight away!

The 6 week course, starting after half term every Tuesday at 3.45pm, has been designed for those new to the game and will take the young golfers from mastering the basic techniques and shots to venturing out on to the nine hole Cuckfield course.

Students will also be encouraged to think and make decisions for themselves, and develop their own mindset, movement and golf skills.

The scheme is being funded with a £600 grant from the Cuckfield Youth Club Management Committee. The grant will be used to provide the young golfers with individual and group tuition, both on and off the golf course, from one of Cuckfield Golf Centre's PGA professionals.

Director of Teaching Nevil Perryman Best said:

"This is a fantastic opportunity for us to run a youth project aimed at local young people. We hope to deliver a unique, engaging coaching environment each week and introduce the young people taking part to playing on the course very early on.

"We believe that learning golf should be fun, so sessions will be relaxed and informal.

"On completion of the course we will offer the follow-on opportunities needed to progress on to membership and continued learning."

Several budding young golfers have already been offered places on the programme but there are still some spaces available. Applicants must live in the village or within a 5 mile radius.

The course is due to start on Tuesday 25th February and the places are available on a first come first served basis. If the programme is over subscribed, other learning opportunities are available.

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## Family to open Pub

Father and son team Mark and Simon Dennis are the new owners of the Rose & Crown. Mark, formerly an accountant, has left his job to start this new family business, while Simon, an experienced chef who learnt his trade in a number of high-end eateries in Sussex and Bristol, has just left his role at an acclaimed local restaurant to join him. Meanwhile, his sister Sarah has been brought on board to design the menus and style the website.

"It really is a family business," Mark commented, "and we are looking forward to all being involved together."

Incorporating both restaurant and barn menus The Rose & Crown will offer a fine dining experience while retaining a pub atmosphere. "We like to think of it as fine dining in an informal setting," Mark said. Simon will be joined in the kitchen by Alan Doyle, who comes from Gordon Ramsay's York & Albany restaurant in Camden.

The pub is currently being thoroughly refitted and is due to open at the end of February.



## Willo now open

There's a new logo on Cuckfield's High Street as Willo opened its doors earlier this month.

When Little Bud Maternity decided to take the business purely online, Lucy Ives, a member of staff at the time, grabbed the opportunity with both hands.

Willo is a baby and children's wear boutique for ages 0-5 years. Mother of twin boys Lucy commented: "Willo provides parents with a great choice of independent clothing labels which they can choose for their children. I think once children start school they begin to have more of a say in what they wear."

Lucy, a former advertising executive, and her family moved to the village from South London last August. Willo is open Tuesday – Saturday 10am-5pm, as Lucy spends Monday with her boys.



# March Food Market

## Sat 8<sup>th</sup> Talbot Courtyard

### 9:30am-12:30pm

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# Mucking about in the great outdoors

By Nicola Brewerton

Have you heard of the Woodcraft Folk? I hadn't, until a friend mentioned them to me a few months ago. It is a national charity who has been supporting local people setting up Woodcraft youth groups all over the country for the last 50 years. There are Woodcraft Folk groups locally in Brighton and Hove, Lewes and Steyning, as well as all over the country.

Since our first thought that this would be a great place for our children to spend some time, we have realised that the only way to make this happen is to set up a group ourselves. We currently have 8 parents and grandparents who are happy to volunteer time every week or once every half term to start our 'Elfin' group. However, we are keen to find more local people to volunteer who might enjoy working with children and getting them enthusiastic about the outdoors, making things, working, learning and playing together. We are particularly keen to find a person who might like to help to lead the group. The Woodcraft Folk is a very inclusive organisation, believing in co-operation and equality, so it



would be great to hear from men or women, old or young who think this might become part of their week.

As the name suggests the Woodcraft Folk do have a love of the outside world, and bushcraft activities such as building dens and fires are part of the activities. However, the meetings will also include parachute games, singing, craft activities, learning about nature, cooking and learning about community based and international issues, such as the environment and sustainable development. We are very flexible, so sessions could include any activities that our volunteers enjoy doing or sharing, perhaps drama or painting or sporting activities. Our Elfins will be aged between around 5 to 9 years old and our plan is to begin sessions after Easter at a local private wood in Warninglid, with a view to broadening out to a larger number of children in a public venue after the summer holidays.

We'd love to hear from you if your interest has been sparked. Phone Nicola on 01444 459249 or email [nicola@roryhunt.net](mailto:nicola@roryhunt.net). For more background information please visit [woodcraft.org.uk](http://woodcraft.org.uk)

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# Penland Farm date change



By Isobel Holloway

Members of the Mid Sussex District Planning Committee were due to vote on the building proposals for Penland Farm at their meeting on 6th February. However, Catesby Estates/Borde Hill submitted last minute changes to their original plans following the WSCC Landscape review.

Unfortunately the law allows the applicants to do this, regardless of the fact that all other interested parties have been bound by deadlines throughout.

We are hoping that the application will be heard on either 6th March or 3rd April.

This Planning Meeting will be open to the public and we are hoping for a good representation to show our opposition. The time is 2pm at MSDC, Oaklands, Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath.

Please note that if you have already written your letter of objection to the District Councillors, this will still count!

Keep abreast of the news at [www.penlandfarm.co.uk](http://www.penlandfarm.co.uk). We will post the new date as soon as we know.



## Where can I park this?

It was just a normal morning and Sue Selby was going about her work when she saw a horse outside the shop. A local resident and client had ridden her trusty steed into the village to book a hair appointment at the hairdressers on Broad Street.

"It was a very exciting few moments," Sue said. "We are always pleased to see our clients whatever mode of transport they choose to use!"



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## Safeguarding the future of Cuckfield Youth Club

### By Claire Cooper

The well-loved youth club and playgroup building in Cuckfield looks set to welcome village children and young people for many more years, if a sale can be agreed with West Sussex County Council. The Parish Council has taken the first steps to secure its future by agreeing at an extraordinary meeting to negotiate with West Sussex to acquire the freehold for the site.

The little building in London Lane was originally built as part of Warden Park's outbuildings, but was transferred by West Sussex and became a base for the youth club and playgroup. It has evolved over the years and is now home to several groups offering activities for a range of children and young adults. West Sussex now wishes to dispose of the site to raise funds and notified the Parish Council they wish to sell it as quickly as possible.

The Parish Council took the first steps towards protecting the building just before Christmas, registering it as a community asset. The Parish council now has six months to put forward a bid to buy the land and building and preserve it for future generations, with the risk that West Sussex County Council will sell it off for development if they don't get their asking price of £200,000.

Parish Council Chairman Nigel Page explained: "This important community facility is key to the social fabric of the village, due to the playgroup and other activities which run out of it and its proximity to other services in the village, such as the Medical Practice and Holy Trinity Primary School."

The Cuckfield Pre-School Playgroup has been based in the building for more than 20 years. The group, which is rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted, is run by a management committee made up of local parents and a team of experienced staff and meets every weekday morning and on two afternoons each week.

The playgroup has invested in the property over the years, obtaining a capital grant to build a patio area. The patio was built on the site of an old portacabin and has provided a well-used outdoor space both for pre-school children and young people.

Although old and in need of replacing, the building is accessible and ideal for wheelchair users, which has

made it a popular meeting place for members of Orchard House who use the building on two evenings each week and for day care sessions during the school holidays.

A karate club meets on Saturday mornings and the Baptist Chapel is currently using the building as a temporary base for its Friday night youth club. A local tutor also runs Maths and English classes there twice a week.

In addition, the building is a popular venue for private parties and other events and is regularly rented.

The Parish Council proposals have the backing of local residents. "Our recent Neighbourhood Plan consultation showed that more than 80% of residents were in favour of retaining the building for youth purposes," said Nigel.

If the bid is successful, the Parish Council will have to begin raising funds to replace the building. "A survey has estimated that it will cost a further £250,000 to replace the building," added Nigel. "That will be hard given what West Sussex is demanding but at least then the community will be able to control its own future."

### Play Meadow bid prepared

The fight to save the Cuckfield play meadow took a further twist last month as members of the Parish Council agreed to submit a formal bid to buy the land for community use.

The meadow, off Courtmead Road, is currently on the market after Mid Sussex District Council decided to sell the land for housing, despite hundreds of objections from local people and from the Parish Council who campaigned for the site to be retained for community use.

Now the Parish Council has decided to join the bidders in the hope of buying the meadow for village use. Chairman Nigel Page explained: "I am pleased to announce that the Parish Council has decided to submit a formal right to bid for the registered community asset of the play meadow. This will not only give us time to begin raising funds, but will also allow the examination of our Neighbourhood Plan to be completed."

The plan proposes that the land should be retained as open space.



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MURPHY'S

## Sunday lunch club



Sitting down to Sunday lunch is one of life's great pleasures, but for those living on their own it can be a rare event.

But every month around 30 Cuckfield residents get together to tuck into a hearty lunch, thanks to a dedicated team of volunteers.

The Solo lunch club has been running in the village for more than 20 years.

"It was originally started by the previous vicar's wife," said current organiser Sarah Salisbury. "She began inviting a group of local people to lunch and it grew from there."

As numbers grew, the diners outgrew the vicarage and the club moved to the Old School. Lesley Seabrook stepped in to run the event, rounding up a team of volunteers to help prepare, cook and serve the two course meals.

Today up to 35 villagers sit down to lunch on the second Sunday of every month, having first booked their place by buying a £5 ticket at the church office.

Sarah leads the team of volunteers who are responsible for various duties, from preparing puddings

in advance, cooking and serving food on the day to the all-important washers-up! "Volunteers can work as often as they choose," said Sarah. "Some may just sign up to one lunch a year, others like to help more regularly. We have several married couples who like to work together."

"Until her death, Katie Stewart, Cuckfield's celebrity cook, cooked a lunch every year," said Sarah. "People loved to help her, even though her vegetables had to be cut to precisely the same length - always the professional!"

Volunteers say they look forward to taking their turn on the rota and enjoy being part of the Solo lunch club team. "We get such a lovely response from the people who come to lunch," said volunteer Kathy. "Not all the guests are elderly but all are living on their own and enjoy the social side of it."

Fellow volunteer Jackie added: "It's lovely to sit and chat and catch up with what's going on in the village. I genuinely enjoy coming here."

Sarah is always on the lookout for more help. To find out more contact Sarah on 01444 417779.



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# What does a dormouse do?

Find out about the secret life of the dormouse at Wakehurst Place during February half term.

A week of family activities with the theme 'Do what a dormouse does!' is being held at Wakehurst, the country estate of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, from 17th-21st February.

Young visitors can discover details about the day dreaming and night nibbling life of the dormouse; use microscopes to take a close look at the plants and insects which make up the dormouse diet; and have a go at building a nest using the materials a dormouse would use.

They can also guess the weight a dormouse has to be to survive its winter hibernation and take part in art activities, making a dormouse puppet using hazel twigs and a collage from nuts.

Walking through Wakehurst's glorious gardens and woodlands, visitors can look out for plants important in the life of a dormouse, such as honeysuckle, oak flowers and catkins, and spot areas which would make the perfect home for them. Children can also discover Wakehurst's Adventurous Journeys play spaces around the estate.



Susan Allan, Wakehurst's Schools and Family Programme Leader, said: "Dormice spend up to three quarters of their life asleep and, when they do move around, it is usually at night and through the canopy of trees and shrubs, so most people know very little about them."

She added: "Wakehurst's Loder Valley nature reserve is a key site for dormice and part of the National Dormouse Monitoring Programme. While visitors won't actually be able to see dormice, our half term activities will enable them to discover what life is like for a dormouse and which plants make up its secret world, using knowledge from our experts here."

Half term activities are held in Wakehurst's sixteenth century mansion and cost £2 per child (normal admission prices apply, accompanied children under 17 are admitted free).

## A Small Town At War, 1914–1918

Cuckfield Museum re-opens on Saturday 15th February with a special display commemorating the centenary year of the outbreak of World War One. It will show some of the many ways the local community was affected, how people from all walks of life supported the war effort and will aim to convey something of the atmosphere of the time with previously unseen items, photographs and drawings from private collections.

The title of the display is taken from Alan Miller's book of the same name, on sale in the museum.



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# Jonathan Morris

VILLAGE PEOPLE

As the new head of Warden Park Academy Jonathan Morris has a large school to take care of and big boots to fill, taking over from Steve Johnson in January. Warden Park head boy Luke Mitchell talks to the new man about the new role.

By Luke Mitchell

For local man (and newly appointed head of Warden Park Academy) Mr Morris, a new challenge involving people and education has never been something to shy away from. Moving around the area throughout the years, Mr Morris has seen various successes in many different places; starting off in the property business and then working with adults with special educational needs. Mr Morris took his teaching qualification before moving on to specialise in Theology, and has held many Assistant and Deputy Headships at schools in the south of England. Now, moving on from a seven year Head Teacher post at St Wilfrids in Crawley, he has come to Warden Park with a wonderful, ambitious (yet achievable) vision: to make Warden Park 'world class'.

This concept is a very important one for Mr Morris and he's presented it to every year group since taking post around three weeks ago. This was playing on the minds of the student body, and indeed mine, so I sat down to ask exactly what the vision of 'world class' was. Mr Morris explained that, perhaps most importantly, a world class school is "rooted in ethics" and takes great care in benevolence amongst the school community. Naturally following behind this is pride in appearance, work and the idea of achieving exceptional exam results across the board – all of which are achievable given the commitment of staff, parents and students that Mr Morris was greeted with.

This vision, amongst many other things, made Mr Morris the standout man for the new job. Aside from great successes and track records with other schools, it is salient that he fits well into the school's already well-established ethos, and would even look to make it more established with new ideas of world class status and improvements on the already very solid foundation of Warden Park Academy. This solid foundation has made a huge impression on Mr Morris too. More often than not, you'll catch him reflecting upon his first impressions of the school, and how struck he was by the exceptional behaviour and work ethic shown by the student body in

and out of the classroom. This had already been shown from reputation, of course, but experience around the academy in his first few days confirmed Mr Morris' hopes.

Also mentioned to me was how excited he was about the strength of the PE Department. Being involved in tennis, equine and other sporting pursuits himself, Mr Morris was pleased to observe the great facilities and potential for expansion upon them. Ideas and proposals for an artificial '3G' pitch have been in the pipeline for a while now and it's an exciting prospect for everyone in the community, not just Warden Park Academy students. It was explained to me that setting up this kind of facility would open up all sorts of opportunities, and local people (including sports clubs) would be able to take full advantage of this. Part of the Warden Park-World Class vision is of course the community, and exciting improvements of facilities could well play a major role in this.

The arrival of such a proactive, ambitious headteacher has come at a good time for Warden Park in general, too. Recently assigned academy status and the addition to the Warden Park family of the Warden Park Primary Academy (formerly Heyworth) in Haywards Heath, mean constantly widening horizons and exciting opportunities for the school, that Mr Morris is already showing signs of carrying through to the best of his ability. These broadening horizons, along with some review of current areas of school life and a dream so ambitious and tangible, make the driving force of Mr Morris behind Warden Park a wonderful prospect that will only see improvement in the Academy in the coming years.

One final poignant idea that Mr Morris left me with was Warden Park is a very good school but not world class. Yet. 'Yet' being the all important phrase. A 'world class' vision for the school is realistic and also achievable: particularly with a man as fun-loving, arty, passionate and dedicated behind the wheel.



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# Campaign Fundraising

## FROM THE MAYOR'S TABLE

By Mike Schlup

This month I thought I'd let the figures speak for themselves. With a record fund following last year's mayoral campaign, The Independent State of Cuckfield (ISOC) was in a position to be more generous than usual. This meant that the procession prizes were the biggest ever. (Every group that participates in the procession with a float or display receives a contribution from ISOC, plus the best entries receive a bonus cash award.) The list below shows how the funds have been distributed by the committee this year. The main beneficiaries were groups supported by the three mayoral candidates (Cuckfield Scout Group, Orchard House and Cuckfield Pre-School Playgroup) but you will see than many other groups have also benefited.

The ISOC committee also retains a portion of the funds raised for emergency support to members of the community and to help support future fundraising events. If you know of an individual or group who might benefit from additional financial support then please contact the Chairman, Jim Ayling, at the White Harte pub on 01444 415434. In future issues I hope to be able to give you some feedback on how the local organisations have directly benefited from the funds raised.

### SENIOR CITIZENS

Christmas Dinner £1,000

### SCHOOLS

Cuckfield Pre-School Play Group £2000  
Cuckoos Play Group £400  
Friends Of Warden Park £400  
Holy Trinity School Pta £400  
Next Step Nursery £400  
Orchard House £2000  
Warden Park (Forest House) £400  
Warden Park Pupils £200

### LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Ansty Residents £400  
Ansty Village Hall Trust £400  
Cuckfield European Association £400  
Cuckfield Museum £400  
Cuckfield Society £400  
Cuckoos Singing Group £400  
Inner Wheel Club Of Cuckfield & Lindfield £400  
New England Wood Trust £400  
Rotary Club Of Cuckfield & Lindfield £400  
Royal British Legion £400  
Singing Allsorts £400  
Womens British Legion £400

### YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

1st Cuckfield Scouts, Cubs & Beavers £3600  
BPM £350  
Burgess Hill Marching Youth £400  
Cuckfield Brownies £400  
Cuckfield Cosmos £400  
Holy Trinity Youth Club £400

### HEALTH & MEDICAL

Cottage Homes £400  
Gillian Fabb Fund £400  
St Catherines Hospice £400  
St Peter & St James Hospice \* £1200

### OTHER

Earl Haig Fund £30  
Cuckfield Golf Society £60

\* This includes nominated donations from individuals or groups who have assisted with the organisation of ISOC events over the year.

# Where we buy matters

## VILLAGE GREEN

By Margaret Tyzack More, Cuckfield Local

2014 is well and truly with us now, so how are all the New Year Resolutions going? Forgotten already? As I write, the grey, wet and windy weather is not exactly encouraging on any front.

Not so wet yesterday though. As I drove through Cuckfield on that Saturday morning there were lots of people in their sporty strip running about all over the place. I was impressed. It seems that many folk in the village are taking responsibility for their own health.

That brings me to the matter of what we eat. In this part of Sussex we are blessed with outlets for good, local food both large and small. Whether one chooses to eat organically grown produce or not, local is worth looking for when it comes to one's own health. The fresher the better. The sooner it comes from field to fork the more of the essential nutrients are still in the fruit and vegetables, which means that the body gets more goodness per bite than from produce flown or trucked from overseas.

You may have heard of terms such as Food Security and Food Sovereignty. Just recently I discovered the difference between Food Security and Food Sovereignty and, no, they are not the same. Food Security is defined as: 'Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.' In other words our food can come from anywhere in the world.

Food Sovereignty on the other hand is explained this way: 'Advocates of Food Sovereignty put the individuals who produce, distribute and consume food at the centre of decisions on food systems and policies, rather than the corporations and market institutions they believe have come to dominate the global food system.' In other words this concerns our food in Sussex, the growers, farmers, distributors and retailers. We can all help ourselves and our area by buying local where we can.

The next Cuckfield Local Monthly Market is from 9.30am to 12.30pm on Saturday 8th March. Come and do yourself a favour and buy our wonderful Sussex vegetables, cheeses, game, fish, cakes and savouries.

'The Millennium Seed Bank – thinking and acting globally and locally,' the second of our Cuckfield Local Spring Talks is being presented by John Dickie from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Come and join us at the Queens Hall, 7.45pm for 8pm on 14th March. You can buy your tickets in advance from Sussex Crafts and Wealden Stores in the village.

For more information or to get involved in Cuckfield Local or Cuckfield Nature Village come and talk to us at The Market or contact Margaret Tyzack More at [makaet@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:makaet@yahoo.co.uk)



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# Creating wow factor

## DESIGN AT HOME

By Fiona Evans, Limited Editions

A sharp intake of breath and that wow feeling when you enter a spectacularly finished house or room is something worth aspiring to, but what exactly is wow factor? Beauty, style and taste are personal and an interior that looks amazing to some may not to others. Modern interiors with vaulted ceilings and luxurious living areas that drift into one another basking in pools of natural light might generate a wow or alternatively you might prefer the traditional approach with antique furnishings. We all like different looks, styles and colours and live in different size spaces but to create 'wow' is challenging. Here are a few ideas that might help.

The first step, de-clutter!

The next step, and probably the most important, is for the interior to have a focal point. For example, the fireplace has traditionally been the focal point in the living room/area as historically fire was a necessity for warmth and light. So the fireplace and mantle piece above it developed as the natural focus generating warmth, glow, cosiness and style. From the earliest interiors the fireplace has evolved in terms of décor progressing through many ages and styles from, for example, the classical, inglenook and Victorian, and now of course the wood burning stove is a popular must have. There are many modern styles of fireplace to choose from, some add wow by being placed in the middle of the room. A necessary focal point is the TV. Flat screens can be positioned above the fire at eye level but allow for insulation to protect the TV (ask a pro). Alternatively, a suitable appliance can do the job if a pretend fire with flames is all that is required. So, if you are lucky enough to have a fireplace of any kind, pamper it a little to show off its features and, as much as possible, group seating in front of or either side of it.

Other focal points could be a fantastic view through a window, a large piece of artwork, an accent wall etc.

I think that lighting is paramount to achieving wow, so encourage as much natural light as possible and enhance with carefully chosen light fittings. Intensify focal points with decent lighting and a good idea is to shine a row of downlighters against a painted accent wall to create interesting fan shapes of light or, for a more even light, consider wall washers to brighten up the whole wall. Strings of LEDs can be used in many locations to add glow and individual LEDs shining up from the floor in the kitchen close to the units create impact.

Bold colours and pastels are on trend for 2014 and bursts of colour about the home, thoughtfully applied against a neutral background, can be breathtaking. Rugs and cushions are forms of art and used here and there with a complimentary accent wall can add to the wow.

Just changing one of the above might add wow, so good luck!

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## Joe Mitchell – a tribute to the first Mayor

By Kate Fleming

Joe Mitchell was elected the first Mayor of the Independent State of Cuckfield in 1966. He set the mayoral standards for this amazing local charity and subsequent mayors, of which there have been forty seven. This charity continues to thrive because of the likes of Joe Mitchell. Mayors were, and still are, elected in a totally unfair, eccentric, penny orientated election which is proud to raise important funds for Cuckfield organisations and charities. This year £20,000 has been distributed.

Joe Mitchell provided a valuable template for the Independent State of Cuckfield Mayors. He continued to support the charity throughout his life. The bell ringing character in a smock that he invented still leads the procession through the village on election weekend.

He was a great mechanic and worked for the Fire Brigade mending the fire engines for many years, but took over the White Hart Public House with his wife Olive in 1962. It was, therefore, as a publican not a sinner that he stood for election. He is remembered with great affection as landlord of the White Hart, presiding over a 'proper' pub in 'the good old days' when 'men were men and women were women', and it appears publicans were real publicans. The first of the modern day Sports Bars devoted to football, cricket, darts and all aspects of male dominated sport. The walls smothered in photographs of teams and racing scenes but without the overwhelming massive television screens of today all playing at full volume. Only occasionally football matches were watched by 'the chosen few' in the back room on an insignificant black and white snowy television screen

The public bar was the centre of activity, with the saloon bar reserved for high days and holidays, bar billiards, budgerigars and after hours drinking – by invitation only with the curtains firmly drawn. The atmosphere, especially on a Sunday when Mabel played the piano, was warm, welcoming and fun-filled, all generated by Joe and his wife Olive. Darts, shove-halfpenny, crib and cards were all encouraged, plus the occasional guest appearance of the genial host as he

whisked an unsuspecting lady customer on to the dance floor and performed the Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy with her to entertain the crowded bar. In contrast, if you were fortunate enough to be staying in the White Hart accommodation, the small letting rooms upstairs, you would need to make sure that you had plenty of change as you staggered up to bed, to feed the electricity meter throughout the night to ward off the 60s cold chez Mitchell.

He was, however, always in control, knew exactly what was going on and who was who. He could spot a disruptive customer immediately and would deal with them as quickly; without negotiation.

Joe was Vice President of the Cuckfield Cricket Club for more than forty years and The White Hart became the spiritual drinking home for players and supporters, both home and away. Cricket Week was the highlight of the summer; Joe and the pub an integral part of play both on and off the pitch.

He had a great sense of humour, enjoyed listening to and telling jokes, exchanging banter and giving his customers as good as he got. Irrespective of class, status or wealth everyone was treated the same – a rare personal quality then and now.

Cuckfield culture has changed dramatically since 1962. Our lives are, in many ways, much more sophisticated, instant, horizons wider and limitless, but there is still a strong sense of community firmly based in the Independent State of Cuckfield and epitomised by the life of the first Mayor. Joe was Cuckfield, and his memory will remain as village life grows, reshapes, social habits change and the next generation takes over responsibility of the citizenship of this beautiful village.

It is, therefore, with gratitude and pleasure that we remember Joe Mitchell who, albeit unbeknowningly, wove himself into the cultural texture of the village and will remain in the Cuckfield tapestry for many years to come.

Thank you, Joe.

*Thanks to Jon and Marion Petitpierre and Peggy Swain for their generous contribution to this tribute.*

# Family Concert

Ensemble Reza will be returning to Cuckfield this Spring for a Family Concert on Sunday 9th March from 4-5pm at Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield.

Hannah Carter, Managing Director of the group, said: "As a mum of three children myself there are very few opportunities locally for families to experience first class virtuoso music making. This concert will be a fantastic introduction to classical music with Ensemble Reza taking the audience on a musical journey with extracts from popular classics including Vivaldi's Four Seasons, Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker, works by Gershwin as well as some much loved film music. During this packed hour the audience will also be invited to come and take part and even conduct the group if they are feeling brave!"

Ensemble Reza is fast becoming known as one of the leading string ensembles in the region. The West Sussex County Times called them 'superior musicians who provide an excellent show living up to their use of the word virtuoso.' Their regular FREE lunchtime concert series from 1-2pm at the Methodist Church on Perrymount Road the second Tuesday of each month is also becoming popular. For more information about all their concerts go to: [www.ensemblereza.com](http://www.ensemblereza.com)

Tickets: £8 adults, £4.50 for 16s and under and students. Available from Pepperbox in Cuckfield, Wealden Stores, Whitemans Green and Carousel Music, Haywards Heath.



## Art Sale still on

The Green Tree Gallery's Annual Art Sale includes works by Cuckfield sculptor Julie Janvrin, alongside original paintings, pottery, textiles, jewellery and more, all at greatly reduced prices!

The Art Sale at the Borde Hill Garden-based gallery runs for one month until 25th February and is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10.30am-4pm.

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# The Dolphin's 8 hour triathlon in support of St Peter & St James Hospice

St Peter & St James Hospice and Freedom Leisure are excited to launch a unique triathlon challenge! On Thursday 20th February, The Dolphin Leisure Centre in Haywards Heath will host the unique 8 hour challenge event covering a staggering 234 miles – the distance from Haywards Heath to Paris as the crow flies! Kicking off at 10am, supporters will take on 15 minute mini challenges, rowing, running or cycling as far as they can.



Andy Jones, The Dolphin's Manager, said: "When we heard St Peter & St James was rebuilding its Day Hospice, to make it more accessible for patients and their families, we wanted to help. Among the services to be housed within the new centre and available to users will be physiotherapy. The improved space will require a variety of equipment, including a massage table. Exercise is always important and with supporters raising funds this way it will be a great way to give something back to the Hospice."

The Dolphin has set itself the challenge of covering the distance from Haywards Heath to Paris in the comfort of the leisure centre. The event will start at 10am and finish at 6pm – or sooner if the speed picks up! Carolyn Robinson, Donor Relationship Manager at St Peter & St James, said: "We are delighted The Dolphin team is helping the hospice in such a proactive way. All the money raised on the day will go directly towards helping us provide equipment for our therapists to work with our patients. The event is going to be a lot of fun, and you can take part whatever level of fitness you are. We hope many people will join us!"

In addition to the triathlon challenge, there will also be a hive of activity with a fabulous cake sale, face painting for children and an impressive raffle with a top prize of a one year Gold Membership to The Dolphin.

There are 128 15-minute slots available for supporters to sign up for. Details of the day, including where to register to take part, can be found by visiting The Dolphin's page of the Freedom Leisure website [www.freedomleisure.co.uk](http://www.freedomleisure.co.uk).

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# Food for friends

ON YOUR TABLE

## Cambodian aubergine and bean curry

### Spice paste (makes 200g)

60ml veg oil  
5 lemongrass stalks  
2 red chillies  
30g ginger  
1/2 tsp turmeric  
6 garlic cloves  
2 shallots  
10 kaffir lime leaves (ribs removed)  
6 green cardamom pods  
1/2 tsp coriander seeds  
1/2 tsp fennel seeds  
100ml water  
small bunch of coriander  
2 tsp shrimp paste (optional)

Using a pestle and mortar, pound all of above together to make a fine paste. Will keep for a week or freeze in ice cube trays.

### Method

1. Heat the oil in a large pan or wok and sauté the garlic, shallots and red chillies for a few minutes until lightly coloured.
2. Stir in the spice paste, fish sauce and palm sugar.
3. Cook for a further 2-3 minutes.
4. Add aubergines, beans, lime leaves, coconut milk and stock.
5. Bring to the boil, then simmer gently for 20 minutes or until aubergines are cooked.
6. Stir in the basil leaves. Season.
7. Serve with rice and garnish with lime wedges and onion rings.

### Main ingredients

2 medium aubergines, cubed  
200g green beans, chopped into 1inch pieces  
3 tablespoons spice paste  
4 garlic cloves  
2 shallots  
2 dried red chillies  
1 tablespoon fish sauce  
(or use light soy sauce if vegetarian)  
1 tablespoon palm sugar (light demerara will do)  
6 kaffir lime leaves  
500ml coconut milk  
300ml veg or chicken stock  
bunch of Thai basil leaves  
salt and black pepper  
lime wedges  
1 red onion sliced



By Caroline Whiteman

Pot lucks have been around for some time now but seem to have enjoyed a real surge in popularity in recent years. If you're not familiar with the term it may just be that you know them by another name. In essence it's a sharing of food with friends and it can lead to new discoveries and unusual combinations of dishes. The idea is that each guest brings something to the meal, a host provides the venue and thereby the work and cost of entertaining is shared. The pressure is off any one person and the dynamic of the gathering is more relaxed as a result. In coming together a few weeks ago with a group of friends the conversation flowed and the flavours took us on a global tour, from Cambodia through India via Italy. Below are a couple of recipes from that evening, with many thanks to Sheila, Mark and Helly for introducing us all to these delicious recipes.



## Bonnie's parmesan biscuits

### Ingredients

100g chilled butter, cubed  
100g plain or wholemeal flour  
50g grated parmesan  
salt, pepper and a large pinch of cayenne pepper

### Method

1. Heat oven to 180C.
2. Put all ingredients into a blender and whiz until it turns into a ball of dough.
3. Cut ball into 3 or 4 pieces and roll them into sausage shapes; place in fridge to firm up before slicing.
4. Slice into small discs (about 40) and spread them out onto siliconised paper and prick them with a fork.
5. Bake in the centre of oven for about 10 mins until just golden at the edges.
6. Allow to cool a little before removing them from the baking sheet.
7. Serve warm.

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# CUCKFIELD EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Spring 2014

[www.cuckeuro.co.uk](http://www.cuckeuro.co.uk)



The CEA sees one of its most important roles as the stimulation of friendships across national boundaries and cultures. Here are a couple of examples. We would always be pleased to hear of our members doing the same thing...

## Boules for 2014

Unlike certain aspects of the European Union, a democratic vote was taken at the last Christmas event to discover what members would like to do about Boules in the current year. By a large majority of hands it was decided that a regular meeting of players was requested rather than one competition, though a combination of the two was not excluded.

Consequently, a Boules coordinator has been appointed to liaise with members to set up whatever those interested wish to do. Roy and Rosemary Gooderham have agreed to take on this role. Please contact them at [roylongacre@aol.com](mailto:roylongacre@aol.com) by 31st March to indicate your interest. Current availability of pistes indicates that early evening on a Friday is possible, say on a fortnightly basis, but all this is subject to what suits most people. If a competition is arranged as well, no one can excuse themselves for lack of time to practise.

## Visit to Crystal d'Arques

We are arranging a day trip to this factory in St Omer in the Pas de Calais on Saturday 29th March. The cost is £35 per head and includes the factory entrance fee. We shall make an early start at 6am from the football car park at Whitemans Green to allow a leisurely lunch and some shopping in St Omer before the tour in the afternoon. We shall be back in Cuckfield by 7.30pm in time to put your clocks forward. There are only 29 seats available, so make sure you get yours from Wealden Stores as soon as possible as the closing date is 1st March. This factory is the 3rd largest in France and processes 190,000 tons of sand every year into 3 million items of glass manufactured every day. We shall also be able to see the final product.



Photo (by Evelyn Stenning): Chairman doing his best impression of a Bavarian thigh slapper for the Independent State's Mayoral procession. However on this occasion he is riding in a vintage Mercedes owned by Keith Wylie, a past chairman of the Cuckfield European Association who is somehow invisible in the driving seat.

## Sound like fun? Join CEA today....

If you like the sound of what we get up to, why not join us? We'd love to hear from you. Membership is just £10 per year. Contact Janine Watts by email at [janine.watts@gmail.com](mailto:janine.watts@gmail.com). Or visit the website: [www.cuckeuro.co.uk](http://www.cuckeuro.co.uk)



## Official visit to Aumale

The weekend 11th to 15th July we have been invited to visit our friends in Aumale. It is a public holiday weekend for them, so there will be lots to see and do, as well as catch up with our many old friends there. Travel arrangements have yet to be made but we are looking at leaving our cars at Newhaven, catching the ferry to Dieppe and being picked up at the ferry terminal by car or coach for the one hour journey to Aumale. Please let Andrew Symonds (andrew.ajims@gmail.com, 01444 412409) know if you wish to join the trip. More details will be published in the next couple of months, with commitments and a closing date of 1st May, when a £10 deposit will be requested for the group travel on the cross channel ferry.

## Christmas Party at Borde Hill

This was a return to a successful formula for an entertaining evening. The ingredients were the location, the impressario, the finger buffet and the local talent in the performers. It was also a fitting end to a successful year for the Association.

The Stephenson-Clarkes welcomed us back and Stephen Laing arranged and led the evening with his usual verve and wit. The local performers were of a high calibre; David Spear's group "No strings attached" led the way with a capella singing and instrumental mouth music, followed by Bob Bannister's "Claybone Ensemble" who used a range of real instruments. The young Seth Fleming wowed us all with his saxophone pieces and Jane Haughton sang a wonderfully comic song with panache. The chairman was also found to be singing, even if the gnu ate some of his words. We had a real Yorkshire rendition of Albert and the Lion by Joe Atkinson and then Brian Chasser looked back on the year but left us wondering if he had confused the wise men of the Christmas story with Al-Queda senior management team on an away day. All was interspersed with singing by everyone, accompanied by Phillip Sear. Finally, a huge thank you to all the folk who provided such a delicious variety of food for the finger buffet. It contributed significantly to the ambiance of the event.

This was an event that everyone was happy to dress up for and even if it overran longer than intended, everyone was eager for more on another occasion.

## Dates for your diary

### AGM and Ploughmans' supper

**8th February**

at Reid House, Whitemans Green.  
7.30pm

### Coach trip to Crystal d'Arques at St Omer

**29th March**

Tickets at Wealden stores, £35 per person, closing date 1st March.

### Official visit to Aumale

**11th to 15th July**

Closing date 1st May for commitments and £10 deposit

### Boules

**Spring/Summer**

Boules at regular intervals following expressions of interest to Roy and Rosemary Gooderham.

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# What's on this month

## AT QUEEN'S HALL

### February

- 21st **Cuckfield Evening Flower Club**  
(please note that this is a change from the 2nd Friday in the month) 7.30pm for a 7.45pm start  
Sue Flight with a demonstration entitled:  
"Spring has sprung"
- 22nd **Cuckfield Vintage Emporium**  
11am-4pm – an exceptional range of great value vintage treasures including decorative homeware, rustic gardenalia, designer labels, exquisite jewellery and country antiques from Sussex's most original and creative stallholders. Delicious homemade cakes and pies in our tearoom. Free tea or coffee when you buy a cake. Entrance £1
- 28th **NSPCC Quiz**  
7.30pm - a meal is included in the ticket price of £12, teams of six. Tickets for the NSPCC Quiz can be bought at Wealden Stores

### March

- 4th **New England Wood Trust Public Meeting**  
The Parish Office at 8.15pm  
An opportunity for the people of Cuckfield to meet the Trustees and hear the Chairman's report on the management of the wood  
All welcome
- 8th **Cuckfield Playgroup Jumble Sale**  
10.30am-12pm - homemade cake stall and refreshments. Please deliver jumble on the day from 8.30-9.30am  
For enquiries please ring 01444 457042
- 8th **AGM Cuckfield Evening Flower Club**  
7.30pm for a 7.45pm start
- 15th **Cuckfield Vintage Emporium**  
11am-4pm
- 25th **Cuckfield Society AGM**  
The Council Chamber at 7.30 for 8pm  
Join us for an update on our activities over the past year and to vote in a new committee. There will also be a speaker from the CPRE

## AND ELSEWHERE

### February

- 15th **Snowdrop Time** - 'Gables', Courtmead Road  
10-12pm. Coffee will be served and you can enjoy over 50 varieties of snowdrops in June Raburns lovely garden. Entrance £2 in add of NSPCC
- 15th **West Hoathly Local History Archive**  
-16th West Hoathly Village Hall 10am-5pm  
Including Special Exhibit on The First World War Teas and Raffle
- 18th **Cuckfield Evening WI 60th Birthday Dinner**  
The Old School 7pm for 7.30pm
- 19th **Mid-Sussex Decorative and Fine Arts Society Lecture** - Clair Hall, Haywards Heath  
10.15 for 10.45am 'The Trees Wave, the Clouds Pass – Virginia Woolf on Life and Art' by Karin Fernald
- 26th **Royal British Legion Women's Section**  
The Old School 2.30pm. 'My Wonders (part 2)' by Evelyn Stenning
- 27th **The National Trust Mid Sussex Association Winter Lecture** - The Studio, Clair Hall 7.30pm  
'Clayton Tunnel' by David Porter

### March

- 4th **NHS Retirement Fellowship** - Franklands Village Hall, Haywards Heath 10.15am. 'History of the Fountain Pen' by Joyce Madgewick
- 7th **Lunchtime Concert Series** - Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield 1-2pm. Olivia Buckland (viola). Soup and a roll from 12.15 in the church. Retiring collection to help fund the concert series and to support the re-ordering project
- 8th **An evening of talks** - The Old School  
7pm for 7.30pm. Neil Sadler - 'A Policemans Lot can be quite an interesting one!' and David Spear - 'School for deaf children in Nepal'. Tickets £8.50 available at Wealden Stores (includes a glass of wine). All proceeds go to NSPCC.
- 9th **Ensemble Reza Family Concert**  
Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield 4-5pm
- 12th **Mid-Sussex Franco-British Society**  
The Function Suite, Clair Hall 8-10pm  
Illustrated talk in French by Séverine Dieudonné: 'Africa Turns Green'. £4 for non-members. (For further information, contact 01444 452385)
- 19th **Mid-Sussex Decorative and Fine Arts Society Lecture** - Clair Hall, Haywards Heath  
10.15 for 10.45am "The Country House in the 20th Century" by Roger Mitchell

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