

Cuckfield Life

Inc. Brook St., Ansty & Staplefield

Local village talk,
by the village

Issue #32 : JunJul '15

Free



Staplefield Village Fête photos

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Richard prepares for charity ride

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New Parish Council details inside

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EDITORIAL

By David Tingley, Editor

In this issue we are very fortunate to have a number of feature articles.

Claire Cooper takes us back in time with a fascinating story about twin sisters **Anna and Mary Kelly** who came back to Cuckfield to meet the nurses who cared for them when they were just two years old and sent to **Horsgate House** in the 50s. Read the full story on **page 12**.

We love local events and this month we can showcase the **Staplefield Village Fête** which took place last Bank Holiday Monday. It looked like a great day. Try and spot someone you know in the photos on **pages 16 & 17**.

Our **Village People** feature takes the form of former Iron Man competitor and coffee shop owner with a real passion for food **Tom Colvill**. He talks to Claire on **page 22**.

On **page 27** it's a privilege to tell a little of the story of a former Cuckfield business woman, **Jane Henderson**, who has run Windowscene in the village for 25 years.

We are pleased to get the latest news from **Cuckfield Parish Council** as they introduce us to some of their new councillors on **page 28**.

Elsewhere we welcome some of the regular articles from the likes of **Fiona Evans** on **page 25** and **Margaret Tyzack More** on **page 19**.

I am always grateful to readers who take the time to send in a photo, suggest a story, enter a competition or tell us about an event taking place. It's all not only useful but tremendously encouraging to know that folk enjoy the magazine enough to want to contribute in some way.

In last month's issue we offered a **Let's Race experience** to one entrant pulled out of a hat. The lucky reader who won was **Catriona McIntyre**. Congratulations!

Lastly, our **What's On** guide comes at the end of the magazine on **page 30**, right before our Advertisers Index. And while I am about it, when you phone any of our advertisers do mention Cuckfield Life so they know where you saw their ad! Thank you.

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NEWS

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

Open Gardens event

Cuckfield NSPCC is holding an Open Gardens afternoon on Sunday 28th June 2–6pm. There will be 11 attractive gardens to walk around, including gardens in Broad Street, Courtmead Road, the centre of the village, the High Street, London Road, Manor Drive and Whitemans Green. Several gardens will be serving teas and there will be plant sales. Programmes giving entry to all the gardens (£5 per person) are available from Wealden Stores in advance or any of the gardens on the day. This is always a popular, relaxed afternoon so do join us. For further information call either 01444 459579/452395.



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New club records set for Cuckfield Archers

Fifty archers from all over Sussex enjoyed almost perfect conditions for archery recently when warm sun with only the slightest of breezes brought out the best of Sussex junior archery talent. County records tumbled at Ditchling Archery Club's Annual 'Windsor' tournament.

Medals went to three junior archers from Cuckfield Archers all of whom who set new club records. Aoife Rice (15), Chris Jeffery (15) and Jaime Malley (11) each shot a personal best score to take home the first prize in their categories. Aoife also won the overall competition prize for the best score when adjusted against handicap. Cuckfield Coach, Bridget Dolan, said: "Aoife has been putting in better and better scores since she started competitions last season, however we are really thrilled with how well Jaime and Chris have done, as both of them only completed their beginner's course with the club this December and were shooting in their first outdoor competition."

Archery is a thriving and growing sport in Mid Sussex. More information about local archery clubs can be found at www.cuckfieldarchers.org.uk and also www.ditchlingac.org.uk



Photo, right: Cuckfield Archers Aoife Rice, Chris Jeffery and Jaime Malley with their winners medals.



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Richard moved to fundraise for Parkinson's

Cuckfield resident and locally renowned estate agent Richard Butler is taking on his biggest personal challenge yet as he attempts to cycle from London to Paris later this year.

Richard, who has lived in Cuckfield with his family for the last 4 years, was inspired to do the charity ride to support Parkinson's UK after seeing the worsening symptoms of his father first-hand since his diagnosis in 2007.

He comments: "With no prospect of a cure for Parkinson's, it is a difficult future ahead for sufferers of this disease. I want to help by raising as much money as I can for such a worthwhile cause." Parkinson's UK offer support and friendship to sufferers and their families, as well as investing in significant research into the condition.

Richard has a target of £3,000, which he'd love to achieve before he begins the ride on 2nd September. The challenge will involve four long days in the saddle, cycling approximately 80 miles per day, before he reaches the finish line at the Eiffel Tower.

If you'd like to sponsor Richard you can do so at the following website: www.justgiving.com/butler2015



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Locks and lots more besides

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Have you paid a visit to Locks & Cobblers in Haywards Heath yet? Although the shop is relatively new (it's only been open in The Orchards Shopping Centre for just over a year) the owner is no stranger to the trade or to the town.

Matt Aartsen was co-owner of a similar business in Haywards Heath for seven years but took the opportunity in 2014 to take on a larger unit next door – thereby creating Locks & Cobblers.

Matt grew up in Sutton and went to work for a local locksmith immediately after leaving school at 16. "It was what you'd call an 'old school' apprenticeship I think," Matt explained. "On my first day my boss took apart a Chubb lock and threw all the pieces on the bench in front of me. My next instruction was simply to 'put it back together and make a key to it'. I cut keys for years."

Matt learned his craft alongside Bruce Magrath for ten years. He recalls taking annual leave to go and work with a specialist safe engineer for two weeks to gain more knowledge and experience. He even took books on security systems on holiday rather than novels!

And that sense of learning has continued to this day. "Every day's a school day," Matt says, and he means it.

Matt went on to work for one of the largest suppliers of locks to locksmiths as a sales rep and travelled the South East forging relationships with all kinds of locksmiths. "I was watching Rogue Traders on TV and recognised one of the dodgy tradesmen as one of my customers," Matt admitted! After this sales role Matt decided to work for himself and he set up as a jobbing locksmith in/around Sutton. "I saw all sorts. I was even shot at at one address!"

Does Matt miss the day-in-day-out call out work? "Actually I do sometimes," he says. "It's the click of having picked open the lock I miss. This is all I have ever

done, and there is still something captivating about working with a lock."

However, Locks & Cobblers do still work up close with locks in situ and Matt offers a 24 hour emergency locksmith service for both residential and business customers. They can also repair and restore old locks in store. Matt shows me a 30 year old lock the like of which hasn't been manufactured for years. The unit has been reconditioned and now looks brand new, saving the customer from buying a new door on the period property.

Matt's colleague Aaron Duplock also serves in the shop and helps to deliver not only key cutting services but also engraving, Video-DVD transfer, replacing watch batteries while-you-wait and shoe repairs using genuine British leather.

The pair can also help motorists with car locks, including reprogramming modern central locking fobs, and even keyless entry systems. The shop stocks branded keys from almost all car manufacturers, plus you can save as much as £150 when compared to a main dealer.

The shop is packed full with thousands of products too, from the biggest selection of shoe laces in Haywards Heath to luggage bags, trophies, security chains, shoe care products and safes. In fact Locks & Cobblers can supply and install a safe in your home if you are worried about protecting your valuables.

Matt's maxim is to be a one-stop shop. If you have a problem there's a very good chance Locks & Cobblers can help solve it!

Locks & Cobblers is open 8.30am-5pm Monday to Saturday in The Orchards Shopping Centre. Call 01444 412 521 for a 24-hour lock service or visit the website for more information: www.locksandcobblers.com

The Tempest performed this summer – Rain or Shine

Professional theatre company Rain or Shine, hailed by The Stage as 'one of the best companies touring open air theatre' is set to delight family audiences once again this summer with its production of The Bard's magical and mysterious masterpiece.

Shakespeare's The Tempest is a tale that encompasses comic capers, romantic encounters, villainous plots and a host of apparitions and spirits, where a fantastic web of intrigue is woven.

Washed up on an unknown isle after a tempestuous storm at sea, survivors of a shipwreck are amazed to find themselves alive, without injury and wearing clothes that are dry and clean! For this is no ordinary isle. It is one ruled by a sorcerer who can control the elements, control minds and conjure up spirits at will. Welcome to Prospero's island, a place where much is not as it seems and long held secrets will be revealed...

Join the acclaimed Rain or Shine Theatre Company for another gripping stage production. Suitable for family audiences from 6 to 96 this is an ideal choice for an outdoor theatrical event, bringing classical theatre into the heart of local communities.

The tour includes a performance at Cuckfield Recreation Ground on Friday 7th August at 7.30pm. For tickets phone 01444 451610 or go online via www.rainorshine.co.uk.

Audiences are invited to bring along low-backed



seating or rugs and a picnic to maximise their enjoyment of the al fresco performances. The company travels across the UK from Alderney to Northumberland, and Wales to Norfolk, visiting some of the country's most picturesque castles, stately homes and gardens imaginable.

Tickets can be purchased from each venue or by ringing 0330 660 0541 or via www.rainorshine.co.uk.

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Ensemble Reza concert

by Hannah Carter

Ensemble Reza are thrilled to be returning to Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield for an evening of beautiful chamber music on Saturday 4th July from 7.30pm. The group has chosen a popular programme featuring music for string quintet (two violins, viola and two cellos), including Schubert's Quintet in C Major, Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata arranged for String Quintet and Boccherini's String Quintet Op 13 No 5. This is a very accessible programme with many familiar tunes. Ensemble Reza are also running a pre-concert talk for all those with tickets from 6.15pm. This will be an opportunity to learn a little more about the programme and meet players from the group.

Tickets cost: Adults £15 and £5 for under 18s and are available from Carousel Music (Haywards Heath), SWALK (Lindfield), Pepperbox & Wealden Stores (Cuckfield).

www.ensemblereza.com



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Remembering Horsgate House

By Claire Cooper

Memories came flooding back to a group of visitors to Cuckfield last month when the Museum played host to a very special reunion.

Twin sisters Anna and Mary Kelly were reunited with some of the nursery nurses who cared for them at Horsgate House when they were just two years old. The museum is currently running an exhibition on the history of Horsgate House and invited the group for a private visit.

The twins spent a year living in care at Horsgate House after their mother became unable to look after them. Although very young, the sisters made a lasting impression on the young nursery nurses, particularly Rosemary Bird (Birdy) who followed their progress after they were fostered and has kept in touch over the last 60 years.

Horsgate House was built in 1865 by the banker Robert Bevan. In 1947 the house was bought by East Sussex County Council and became a temporary home for 12 babies, 24 children and a team of six students and four staff nurses.

Among them was Rosemary, who started working at Horsgate House in 1955, and colleagues Bobbie Taylor (now Freeland), Ann Reeves (now Small) and Jenny Harper (now Hartfield), who were all delighted to attend the reunion and share their stories.

The nurses have fond memories of life in the grand house, particularly the sweeping, highly polished staircase which dominated the hall and the beautiful gardens. "The building had so much character," said Rosemary. "Our toddler room was the former billiard room."

All the nurses remember being on their hands and

knees polishing the wooden floors and having to the make perfect beds, complete with 'hospital corners'! "Which I still do today," said Rosemary!

Staff were on duty 24 hours a day, and the morning shifts starting with the first feeds at 4.45am.

Older babies were fed sitting at a semi-circular table, designed so the nursery staff could feed several at one time. "It was a great design as we were able to sit as a family group but it was also easy to feed the children," said Ann.

"The food was wonderful and the children were well dressed too, with three sets of clothes - play clothes, ordinary clothes and going out clothes, along with outdoor shoes and wellies," said Bobbie, who now lives in Haywards Heath. "I remember spending hours sewing nametapes into clothes for new children."

The nurses also learnt to knit bonnets for the babies.

The staff did their best to create a homely feel for the children, keeping them busy with painting, water and sand play and outdoor activities during the summer, including a paddling pool.

The nurses recall tucking babies into huge prams and walking into Cuckfield village to buy tins of baby milk. "The perambulators usually had four babies in them, plus two others walking in front and two more at the back," said Bobbie. "The journey back was quite a struggle as it was all uphill."

Christmas was a special time for everyone. "We had wonderful Christmases," said Ann. "I remember carol singing, decorating the hall and the excellent food.

"We would walk across the fields to church for Midnight Mass and were allowed to open presents when we got back."



The nurses also remember the two matrons. "Mrs Lyle was a bit of a tartar and would ring a bell if the children in the room under her were making a noise at night!" said Rosemary.

"She would tiptoe around, but was often given away by her rattling keys!" added Bobbie. "Miss Whitmarsh was more gentle with us and with the children, allowing the older ones to help the full-time gardener."

The nurses spent their precious time off in the village, after getting permission from matron to go out at night. Ann and Rosemary played in a local darts team. "We had lots of fun – beetle drives, dances, parties, tennis and singing. We were like one big family," said Ann, who met her future husband Pete while working at Horsgate. "Fortunately Matron liked him!"

All the children seemed happy, even though they were in care, and while many were fostered or adopted, some went back to their birth parents.

"I remember there being great excitement when one baby was adopted by Alfie Bass the actor," Rosemary recalled.

Mary and Anna don't remember much about their time at Horsgate, although they were clearly favourites with the staff. "We were allowed to take children home at weekends and I remember taking the girls on the train to Lewes for a lovely day out," said Rosemary.

After a year in care, the girls were fostered by Tom and Elsie Fletcher from Copthorne, who also cared for their grandson David who became like a brother to the

girls. The twins' birth mother, who moved to Ireland, also kept in touch and remains a part of their lives today.

"We went on to have a wonderful life," said Mary.

Horsgate closed in 1966 and the children and staff transferred to the new St Nicholas Nursery in Backwoods Lane, Lindfield. "We were so sad when Horsgate closed," said Rosemary. "Although purpose built, the new nursery was modern and lacking in character. We missed our 'secret hideaways'!"

Coincidentally twins Mary and Anna now live in St Nicholas Court which was built on the site of the Lindfield Nursery after it closed in 1979.

The former nurses hold a reunion at least once a year and all of them keep in touch with some of the children they cared for.

Horsgate House went on to be converted into 25 housing association apartments. Owned by Affinity Sutton, it now stands empty and is currently up for auction.

The Cuckfield Museum exhibition, which includes memorabilia and a collection of photographs from Horsgate House, with many items donated by the Bevan family and the nursery nurses, runs until June.

Photo: Former nursery nurses enjoy the Horsgate House exhibition, joined by twins Mary and Anna Kelly. From left: Mary Kelly, Jenny Hartfield (nee Harper), Ann Small (nee Reeves), Rosemary Bird, Bobbie Freeland (nee Taylor) and Anna Kelly.

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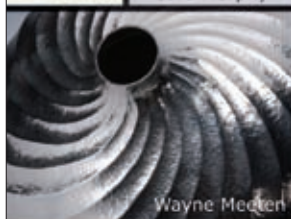
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Staplefield Village Fête

There's no doubt that Staplefield was the place to be on Bank Holiday Monday when the village staged one of the most successful fêtes in its history.

Hundreds of families descended on the village green to enjoy an afternoon of traditional events and activities, from a Punch and Judy Show to classic cars.

"It was quite extraordinary, and definitely one of the most successful yet," said committee member Elspeth Montgomery. "It was a lovely busy, buzzy day and we were all delighted with the turnout!"

"People have described it as a 'Downton Abbey' type of Fête, with lots of bunting and a very traditional feel."

The event, which raised more than £10,000 for St Mark's Church, the Village Hall and other Staplefield charities, was opened by local MP Nicholas Soames. Local celebrity Susannah Constantine also made a welcome return to judge the popular dog show.

Families were kept entertained with fairground rides, a chance to meet rare owls, stalls and sideshows, and food and drink including a popular Pimms and strawberries tent and hog roast.

Others enjoyed stepping back in time and exploring the dozens of vehicles in the classic car show, from police cars and buses, Rolls Royces and an impressive range of Morris Minors.

"The classic car show gets bigger every year, with the first Morris Minors arriving on the green at 8am in the morning!" said Elspeth.

New this year was the Arts Inclusive Festival run by the Circles Network, which provided opportunities for all members the community to enjoy creative activities, from designing lettering to transforming old books into works of art.

Serving Pimms on a summer's afternoon are Sarah Irvine, Lizzie Reynolds and Annabel Samengo-Turner



Beautiful wood carvings imported from Bali by Staplefield resident Nichola Bentley Bayer made an impressive display





Selling hairbands on the 1st Staplefield Brownies stall were, from left, Daisy, 8, Amelie, 10 and Scarlet, 8.



Owls, including this Asian brown wood owl pictured with keeper Ben, were popular with the crowds



Winner of the best puppy competition was Fergus, pictured with owner Molly



Ready to hit the road in their classic 1912 Ford Model T are Tony and Jan Snow with their dogs Alfie and Bingley



Busy colouring in the Arts Tent are Ivy, 4, and Isla, 3, with Rachel Cowell from Ginger Moo





A bit of 'you' time

THE STYLE LOUNGE

The Style Lounge could be the embodiment of many girls' dream that has come true. Interestingly though, in this story it wasn't the owners dream originally.

Amy Packer (pictured) opened the doors to The Style Lounge, a hair and beauty salon in Bolnore Village, in April this year. But the story of the creation of the business goes back much further.

Amy was brought up in the local area with her family who were into amateur dramatics. Her first production was in a pantomime by The Weald Theatre Group when she played one of the babes in Babes in the Wood at just eight years old.

Amy left school and went to Lewes College to study Hair & Beauty. When asked why that appealed, she recalled her time growing up: "I guess I was used to being around people who were always dressing up and using skills like hair and make-up to transform themselves into somebody else. I liked the idea of doing that for a living."

Three years later and she was. With the qualifications and experience under her belt Amy first began working as a stylist in a salon.

In 2009 she branched out on her own as a mobile hairdresser, with her work taking her all around Sussex as she loaded the equipment in and out of her car. Amy worked tirelessly to drum up business by printing flyers and dropping them through doors herself in between clients. "It was incredibly hard work, especially to start with, but the feeling of building something of your own was really exciting," Amy continued.

An area she was introduced to, and subsequently trained in, was make-up specifically for film and TV work – something which she found very enjoyable. This, in turn, also led to her finding and learning a whole new skill too: permanent makeup.



Permanent make-up is a technique which involves changing the colour of the skin in order to accentuate features. Amy explains: "It uses mineral pigments and requires a colour boost every one or two years but can be a very effective way of creating confidence for many women." She tells the story of a client of hers who had been suffering from stress since losing her husband. The result was that her eyebrows all but disappeared. "Before the treatment," Amy goes on, "she was looking down and hunched over; clearly had low self-esteem. But afterwards she would greet you with a warm smile. Her whole demeanor had changed, just by giving her back one small part of her facial features."

In May 2014 life took a different turn for Amy as she fell pregnant. She already knew that mobile hairdressing wouldn't be forever, so this fast-tracked her decision to be bold. After a lot of looking around she found the unit in Bolnore and knew it was ideal. The decision to open her own salon also meant she could employ her own family, as her sister Emily was a stylist and other sister Sarah and mother Jo were both trained beauticians.

They had all chosen those paths after Amy had begun her own but, in the case of her mother, Amy only found out much later that her she had originally wanted to train as a beautician when she was 18 but wasn't able to pursue it at the time and ended up working for a building society. Now, under the management of her own daughter, Jo was pursuing her teenage dream!

The Style Lounge is open six days a week and provides hairdressing for ladies and gents, cutting, colouring and treatments. In the beauty side they cater for manicures, pedicures, waxing and lash extensions. And they can also carry out permanent make-up and micro-needling for eyebrows, and they are also one of the first official practitioners of the Rejuvapen in the South East, which is a fantastic anti-aging treatment and tool for general tightening of the skin, especially around stretch marks.

Call in or phone 01444 410576 to ask about any of their treatments. The growing hair business is also currently looking for an additional hair stylist and a receptionist. www.hair-n-beauty.co.uk

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Law of Ecocide?

VILLAGE GREEN

By Margaret Tyzack More, Cuckfield Local Homework! Not yours you will be glad to hear. Not mine either or so I thought. However, grandma fitted the bill so off we went. The homework in question is a school project that Alice, aged seven, is working on 'All creatures great and small'. It involved finding out as much as she could about large creatures, dinosaurs to be exact. Grandma lives in Cuckfield, so over to me. We had great fun getting to know the iguanodon in its Jurassic Park setting in the adventure playground. However, the playground quickly took Alice's interest over the dinosaur! To Cuckfield Museum next, where the interactive computer screen showed the story of Mantell's discovery of the Iguanodon in the old quarry at Whitemans Green. Notes were taken, "Job done," thought Grandma.

Not so. I was co-opted once more for a Nature Walk to search for small creatures this time. "Aha!" thought I ... "an ideal opportunity to explore 'sharing the unseen society's living space' which I mentioned last month. Where to walk? Up the twitten, through Buttinghill Drive, aka the Bylanes Close Development of new houses, into the wonderful wildlife area that has come to the Parish after the build. We found tadpoles in the pond, dragonflies over the lake and looked for creepy crawlies on the leaves of newly planted woodland and in the grasses.

As we walked, I reflected on hearing Polly Higgins, Earth Rights Lawyer, at an event hosted by Transition Chichester, Voice for the Earth. It came to her when working as a barrister on a long civil case that people, companies, charities, church all have standing in law but not the Earth. No legal right to life for trees, animals, Earth as a living entity. She found that indigenous peoples and Buddhists around the world thought as she did. How do we create a legal duty of care for the Earth? Her great goal is that the law of Ecocide be passed by the United Nations as the 5th Crime Against Peace. The significant harm that Ecocide does to people and planet is exemplified by the destruction of pristine arboreal forest, the size of England and Wales, in Alaska in order to extract oil from the tar sands. My blood runs cold at the thought and I'm brought back to the beauty around us here in Cuckfield.

Our Nature Walk came to an end very close to Wealden Stores. A shared Magnum White ice cream did much to restore mind and body after our homework. Returning Alice to her family I got into deep discussion with my son-in-law as to whether Ecocide or Global Warming is the greatest threat to humanity now. This was never going to be a win win situation!

If you will, have a look at <http://pollyhiggins.com/> <http://eradicatingecocide.com/>

The next Cuckfield Local Food Market is on Saturday 11th July from 9.30am to 12.30pm in the Talbot Courtyard. www.cuckfieldlocal.wordpress.com



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* Takeaway available *

By Simon Dennis, head chef at The Rose & Crown

This month we are highlighting the fact that it is the best Sussex Asparagus season for several years. This special vegetable is easy to cook and prepare. It makes a great starter for al fresco dining and can even be cooked on the BBQ. Our recipe shows you how to make a great starter but as you can see from the photo of our starter it can be made extra special with a few chef's touches!



Fresh Sussex Asparagus

Ingredients

2 Bunches of fresh British Asparagus, approximately 500g
100g unsalted butter
Maldon sea salt to taste
Freshly cracked black pepper

Method

1. Trim off the stalky woody end of the spear. It naturally snaps at this point.
2. Bring a pan of water to a hard boil. Remember to salt the water.
3. Cook for no more than one minute to keep it firm and fresh.
4. Drain in a colander.
5. Place asparagus into melted butter and season with Maldon salt and pepper and simply serve and enjoy this wonderful vegetable.

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Tom Colvill

VILLAGE PEOPLE

If it's true that you are what you eat then Cuckfield's Iron Man and restaurateur Tom Colvill is clearly on the right track. Tom's recipe for success as a chef and an athlete is a simple one - good healthy, wholesome home cooked food. Inspired by his grandmother who is in her mid 80s and still enjoys swimming in the sea, Tom is passionate about eating well and has been sharing his love of good food with fellow villagers since opening his café tucked away behind the High Street. Tom tells us how he went from working as a city surveyor to creating culinary delights with one of the country's most respected chefs, and how his Iron Man dream almost went up in flames...

By Claire Cooper

Tom's Food opened last August, after Tom transformed the tiny space at the back of his mum's shop, Nicky C, into a cosy retreat for coffee and lunch. It's the culmination of a dream which began when he turned his back on office jobs and city life and headed for the coast.

"After leaving university I worked in London but I was never really happy in an office," Tom recalled. "When the recession hit it gave me a chance to re-evaluate.

"I've always been sporty and artistic and enjoyed cooking, so I looked for a lifestyle which would combine all three."

The answer came from family friend Pam, who founded a successful business in Devon creating jams, chutneys and pickles.

"Pam was a friend of celebrity chef Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, who nicknamed her Pam the Jam and used many of her products in his recipes," said Tom. "Pam's daughter worked for Hugh at River Cottage and was able to organise work experience for me in the kitchen. It was a fantastic experience."

Not only was Tom learning from one of the country's top chefs, he was also enjoying the lifestyle he had dreamed of. "I loved being able to cycle to work, swim during my time off and learn so much about food preparation - very different from life in London."

Tom went on to spend six months working in a kitchen in Salcombe before leaving to join top chef Claude Compton (owner of Claude's Kitchen and Amuse Bouche) at his restaurant in Fulham. "At Claude's my cooking skills were elevated to the next level, learning new techniques and hopefully mastering the restaurant trade," said Tom. "It was a great kitchen to work in and I learnt so much during my two years with Claude but subconsciously I always knew that I wanted to do my own thing."

Meanwhile, Tom's mum had moved to Cuckfield in 2012, opening her business Nicky C and moving into the accommodation above the High Street shop.

"We had talked about doing something together where customers could shop and eat," said Tom.

"We looked at several places, including a pub in Tandridge and an old barn in Oxted, but mum was driving though Cuckfield, spotted this place, stopped at the estate agents and the rest is history!"

Tom joined her last June and began transforming the space at the back of the shop into a café, while also training for one of the world's toughest physical challenges - the Iron Man.

Tom's Iron Man quest came following a personal tragedy when a close friend, Phillipa, took her own life

following a battle with depression.

"It was thanks to Phil that I got work experience at River Cottage, which started the rolling pin rolling and led to me starting my own café," said Tom.

"I decided to train for an Iron Man event to support the Charlie Waller foundation – which aims to raise awareness of the symptoms and dangers of depression and remove the stigma that is attached to mental illness.

"Personally I feel depression goes unnoticed in so many people, young and old," said Tom. "With pressures in the workplace, life choices or personal, it can spiral out of control until it is too late.

"I've always been sporty and love the outdoors, so thought it would be a great challenge and a good way to raise money."

Tom also supported a second charity, Team Bryant, which was set up to support Jo Bryant after she was diagnosed with a very rare form of cancer - Cardiac Sarcoma.

Tom explained that an Iron Man is like a huge Triathlon. The disciplines are the same – swimming, cycling and running but the distances are vastly different. "The Iron Man involves swimming 2.4 miles (160 lengths of a standard swimming pool), cycling 112 miles (London to Brighton and back again) followed by a marathon," said Tom.

Iron Man events are held at various locations all over the world but Tom chose one of the most challenging at Lake Tahoe in California. "The altitude and hills make conditions tricky but I have friends living in San Francisco and I hadn't had a holiday for several years, so decided it was a good opportunity combine the two," said Tom.

Tom began his training a year before the event. "Looking back, the training seems horrendous and outrageous but I managed by breaking it down into manageable chunks, gradually building up," he recalled. "I remember arriving home at 5pm and getting straight on to the exercise bike in the kitchen for the next six hours!"

When the day finally arrived and Tom stood on the beach in his wet suit waiting for the signal to start – disaster struck. "We were told that forest fires had broken out and that the event was being cancelled.

"It was soul destroying. To have trained so hard both mentally and physically and then have it snatched away 10 minutes before the start was devastating."

However, Tom picked himself up and two weeks later was on the starting line for the Barcelona Iron Man. "The course was completely different, much flatter, and I was on my own for much of the time," he recalled.

He finished with a very respectable time of 11 hours 40 minutes.

"Finishing was actually a massive anti-climax, and I didn't feel anything like the elation I had expected," said Tom. But finding he had raised more than £3,000 for his charities, and opening Tom's Food the following week, soon lifted his spirits!

And he hasn't ruled out training for a second Iron Man event. "I'm sure I could go quicker now that I know what's ahead, so I'll never say never," he says. But for now Tom's focus is on developing his business and creating new dining experiences for customers.



Tom's Food is currently open during the day for coffee and light meals.

In the evening the café can be booked for private dining and Tom been overwhelmed by the response. "Everyone loves it – and I've been booked solid since I started," he says. "It's a nice cosy, intimate atmosphere – people feel like they are dining in their own home."

When Tom's not cooking he's researching new recipes and products, often finding inspiration on Instagram and Pinterest where he also shares many of his recipes. "I like to change the menu every few weeks, using seasonal and locally sourced products," he says.

"I know exactly what I want to create – good seasonal fresh healthy food, put together nicely. My kitchen is small with conventional equipment so I keep my food relatively simple, although I do have an Aga which is great for slow cooking."

Next month sees the opening of the newly extended premises which will also open in the evenings. "I'm aiming to create a comfortable, relaxed 'chilled out' feel to the place, and serving home cooked comfort food, done well and reasonably priced," said Tom.

"I envisage a large shepherds pie in the centre of the table and group of friends tucking in! I want to make it relaxed and fun."

Décor is important, particularly as everything you see in Tom's café is for sale, from the chairs and tables to the lamps and rugs, even the cutlery and glasses. "If you like it then why not buy it!" said Tom. "It's worked well so far, so we'll be continuing it in the bigger venue."

To find out more about Tom's Food visit the website www.tomsfood.com



Garden bugs enjoyed in Cuckfield

Village resident and keen wildlife photographer Peter Lovett recently enjoyed the company of a Cockchafer (also known as a May Bug) in his sunny garden.

Peter cites the spectacular creature (pictured here on his finger) as a good reason why we should not use insecticides on domestic gardens.



Wakehurst Place: 50 years, 50 prizes

In celebration of 50 amazing years of Kew at Wakehurst Place in Ardingly the gardens are giving away 50 amazing prizes to 50 lucky winners:

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- 5 x pair of Day Tickets + cream tea for 2 at The Stables restaurant, Wakehurst.
- 5 x kids gift bags from the shop – bug catcher kit, a variety of seed packs and the kids Wakehurst Guidebook.
- 3 x pair of Day Tickets for Scythe and Cider festival + special prize from Toro Poco, the taste of Spain: 18th-19th July 2015.
- 1 x VIP family tour of our Adventurous Journeys play spaces.
- 1 x VIP family tour of Loder Valley Nature Reserve, followed by Badger Watching evening.

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Styling in Neutrals

DESIGN AT HOME

By Fiona Evans, Limited Editions

Perhaps it's time to decorate your living space but fashionable swathes of bold colour aren't your thing? Why not create a stunning space using a neutral palette of blacks, whites and greys? Here are some ideas and suggestions to get you started.

Gone are the days when popular paint choices were 'magnolia' and white, as grey walls or joinery have hit a height in popularity. There are a staggering number of whites and an abundance of greys to choose from when deciding on a scheme, brands such as Dulux or Valspar will match and mix a grey for you by scanning an article that is your preferred tone of grey. Easy does it though, too dark a grey or too much can make an interior dark or depressing so it's best to use it alongside white. Used successfully a neutral scheme works well in a space that has plenty of natural light and with thought can widen and shape an interior. If you use a soft powdery paint on walls and eggshell paint on woodwork these will add to a very tranquil look. Perhaps you would like just a touch of colour instead of grey. Pale hints of colours that contain grey in their tone, such as Farrow and Ball paints, work well as a contrast to white.

A good tip to achieving the best outcome in a neutral interior is to layer the space with different textures, making sure that the accessories match your neutral pallet to achieve depth and balance. For example, a deep pile rug, a woven fabric on the sofa, silky or cotton cushions, a chunky knitted throw, loose woven wire baskets and patterned curtains all add texture, depth and interest. Contrasts in tone also bring out the best in a neutral interior. Some such suggestions are: a black curtain pole supporting pale patterned curtains against a white wall, black and white floor tiles, a white fake fur rug on a natural wooden floor, natural wooden furniture against painted exposed brickwork, black and white geometric designs.

Metallic finishes such as shiny brass and chrome are growing in popularity and really suit a neutral interior; metallic furniture legs, lamp stands, metal flecked flooring, chrome picture frames all do a great job in reflecting light and providing contrast.

Natural light will generate stunning shadows in your neutral interior and the greys will look darker in corners and change with electric light. Bounce light around the space with crystal chandeliers and metal framed mirrors.

Certain styles support neutral pallets such as the Scandinavian look, mostly white and textured but with added pops of vibrant colour punctuating the space and drawing the eye to a focal point. The style includes tiled or wooden floors, some very bright whites and leather or wooden furnishings, the blog 'my scandinavian home' gives some great examples.

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Seamstress retires



By Claire Cooper

The curtain came down on one of the village's most popular and long-standing businesses last month when Jane Henderson retired from Windowscene.

For a quarter of a century Jane has been enhancing Cuckfield homes with handmade curtains, cushions and blinds.

But Jane's career as a curtain maker has now come to a close and she is already making the most of her new found freedom!

Jane was taught to sew by her mother, who worked as a domestic science teacher. She made her first curtains shortly after leaving home. "When I got my first flat I couldn't afford to buy ready-made curtains, so I made them myself," said Jane. "I used to make my own clothes too, but often by the time I'd finished I wasn't sure I liked them any more! And it's so much more fun to go into a shop and try things on!"

Jane came to Sussex 29 years ago after marrying a local whose parents lived in Cuckfield.

After having two children, Jane decided to leave her job in the city and look for work that would fit in with family life.

She began selling fabric from home and after a successful year got the opportunity to buy the shop in Cuckfield High Street. "For many years it was the butchers shop run by Mr Tidy who lived with his family in the flat above," said Jane.

The shop gave Jane the opportunity to expand the business to include a curtain-making service.

Jane was soon joined by Karen Sedgwick-Smith who took on most of the curtain-making, leaving Jane free to work on smaller blinds and cushions. The pair have now worked together for 23 years.

Over the years Jane has seen huge changes in the way windows are dressed. "We have gone from very fussy Austrian blinds, which I always thought looked rather like frilly knickers, to today's simpler styles which use far less material," said Jane.

"Blinds have also become very popular, but I don't think you can beat a nice pair of long curtains."

Many customers have become friends, returning to Jane after they have moved house or redecorated.

"It's been lovely following the lives of customers as they move to bigger homes with growing families," said Jane. "I've made curtains for couples' homes when they first married, then the nursery and then the next home.

"Customers have come from London and all along the coast and I have one lady from a travelling fair who calls in to have tablecloths made when she's in Sussex.

"The best bit about running my business has been meeting lots of different people and most of them have been charming, although there have been one or two flies in the ointment! I've also been lucky to have a wonderful succession of helpers in the shop: Diane Rowe, Jacqueline Emerson and Margaret Harrison. Their relationship with customers has been a huge asset to my business."

"I've loved helping people to choose their fabric and have enjoyed being in the middle of the village."

Jane's professional team of curtain makers and track fitters have ensured that most jobs have gone smoothly. "Although I once made a pair of curtains inside out and had to unpick them and start again," said Jane. "It's easily done as it's not always obvious which side of the fabric is the front!"

Jane decided to retire earlier this year when a set of circumstances made the timing perfect.

"I had been thinking of retiring for a couple of years, but when I received an offer from a supplier to buy the stock and heard that Cuckfield i Wear were looking for new premises, everything fitted into place," she said. "It all happened rather quickly."

Jane is now looking forward to playing more tennis, spending more time in the garden and travelling. "We have already been away for a couple of breaks and have holidays booked in Belgium and Ireland," said Jane, who is also a long-standing member of the Cuckfield European Association.

"And I still have my industrial sewing machine and my spare bedroom is full of rolls of fabric, so I'm sure I haven't seen the last of my curtain-making days!"



Cuckfield

PARISH COUNCIL

News from Cuckfield Parish Council

SUMMER 2015

Your new Cuckfield Parish Council for 2015–2019

Following the elections in May, six nominations were received for the ten seats held by Cuckfield Parish Council. The Returning Officer of Mid Sussex District Council duly elected the following Parish Councillors 'unopposed': Andy Burton, Andrea King, Colin Mercer, Nigel Page, Sean Ryan and Martin Sambrook.

We are pleased to announce the remaining four vacancies, in the Office of Parish Councillor, were subsequently filled by co-option and are now held by: Sue Burgess, Marie Dormer, Paul Mantripp and David Mortimer.

We welcome all members (new and returning) to what is a varied and interesting role. More details will appear in our next newsletter but in the meantime contact details for councillors appear opposite.

We say farewell to Ken Gregory who has 'retired' from the Parish Council after nearly twenty two years of service. Our sincere thanks go to Ken for the tremendous contribution he has made to the village over those years. We also said goodbye to Stephen Blanche, Piers Harrison and June Seale who stepped down and thank them too for their time, energy and commitment to the Council.

Parish Council meetings

June - August

25th June	Youth Centre (Community Bldg)	7.30pm
	Council	8.15pm
9th July	Planning	7.30pm
	Environment	8.15pm
30th July	Planning	7.30pm
	Youth Centre (Community Bldg)	8.15pm
20th August	Planning	7.30pm
	Roads & Traffic	8.15pm



YOUR PARISH COUNCIL

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Vice-Chairman

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The Parish Council Office in the Queen's Hall is open from 10 am–4 pm each Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Dramatic Society's bold staging of Wilde's classic

By John Fisher

Oscar Wilde's 120 year old play is always fresher than one might expect and director Harriët Sheldon wisely left both script and its late Victorian setting unaltered while using a bold traverse staging.

The play opens with Algy (Tom Hounsham) strutting about his apartment like an over-excited labrador while berating his dryly nonchalant manservant Lane (Laurence Leng). His friend Ernest Worthing arrives to woo Algy's cousin Gwendolen and Algy discovers that 'Ernest', is actually Jack (David Corbett), who then admits he uses the alias Ernest in London.

Algy attempts to extract an introduction to Jack's young ward Cecily, but to no avail. Jack has the cocky confidence of a terrier that has just learned to walk on its hind legs and believes it deserves a biscuit. However, his poise deserts him when he proposes to Gwendolen.

Perhaps Jack is unsettled by the dictatorial demeanour of her mother, Lady Bracknell (Philip Robinson), who, secure in her social status as an alpha lioness, wastes no time at all in putting Jack in his place.

Gwendolen's (India Whitehouse) life is as tightly controlled as a caged bird but we see her preen with pleasure at the attentions of the man she knows as Ernest and his exotic origin as a founding. She defiantly resolves to maintain their relationship.

Later, in the garden at Jack's country home, Cecily (Samantha Oliver) twitters away amongst the flowers. Uninterested in her studies, she is more concerned with Jack's mysterious brother when ironically stern Merriman (Keith Moss) informs her that Mr Ernest Worthing has arrived. Algy's instant devotion, 'Ernest's' roguish reputation and a proposal please her greatly.



Cecily's governess, Miss Prism (Emma Gosling), clucks like a mother hen and clearly has a beak sharp enough to peck any hand that does not please her. But more than Miss Prism's eyelashes flutter when she is in company with the rector, Dr Chasuble (Paul Davey), whose wide-eyed surprise and bookish manner are decidedly owlish. Jack appears wearing mourning clothes, before coming face to face with his 'dead' 'brother'.

Gwendolen meets Cecily and feathers are ruffled when they find they are both engaged to 'Mr Ernest Worthing'. But when they discover that neither of their suitors is who they claimed to be, they storm off in sisterly solidarity.

As the two pairs of lovers resolve their differences Lady Bracknell arrives. Still unimpressed by Jack, she does however perform a volte-face regarding Cecily and Algy when she discovers Cecily will inherit a considerable fortune.

But Jack will not let Cecily marry Algy unless he can wed Gwendolen and, with Lady Bracknell intransigent, all seems lost before Dr Chasuble arrives and happens to mention Miss Prism. Lady Bracknell pounces on first the name and then the poor governess herself. Her interrogation solves the mystery of Jack's parentage and we finally learn the Vital Importance of Being Earnest.

Audiences clearly enjoyed the production and the final night's sell-out show demonstrates how CDS's reputation continues to grow. We are lucky to both have this high quality theatre group in the village and that it manages to make new members welcome!

For more details on getting involved with CDS see www.cuckfielddramaticsociety.com

Cuckfield teacher exhibits paintings

Former Warden Park Academy teacher Irene Burns is one of seven artists taking part in the Green Tree Gallery's latest exhibition at Borde Hill, 'At the Water's Edge'.

Irene, who taught Design & Technology at Warden Park, has been inspired by the seascapes of Sussex, Scotland and Greece as well as by the frozen water of the Alps. "I try to create an evocative and dramatic atmosphere rather than photographic realism - although I don't describe myself as an 'abstract' painter," says Irene.

'At the Water's Edge' runs from 27th June until 15th August and features affordable paintings, prints and sculpture alongside the Gallery's usual selection of jewellery, pottery, textiles, toys and cards.

See www.greentreegallery.co.uk for opening times.



What's on this month

AT QUEEN'S HALL

AND ELSEWHERE

Regular weekly classes (many are drop-in classes):

Monday

- 9.30am **Fluid Physio (Pilates)**
11am **Weigh In – Work Out**
7.30pm **Haywards Heath & District Canine Society – Dog Training**

Tuesday

- 9am **Tiny Soccerstars** for 18 months to 5 years
9.30am **Tinkerbells** - music classes for children
3pm **Codanza**
6.30pm **Haywards Heath & District Canine Society**
7pm **Pilates**

Wednesday

- 9.30am **Tinkerbells**
10am **Stroke Communications Group**
12.30pm **Zumba Dance Fitness®** (Live Wire)
1.30pm **Modern Line Dancing**
4pm **Codanza**
8pm **Best of Ballroom Cuckfield Dance Club**

Thursday

- 9am **Tumbletots**
9.30am **Tinkerbells**
10am **Pilates**
7.30pm **Social Ballroom and Latin American Dance**

Friday

- 7.30pm **Evening Flower Club**
(second Friday of the month)
7.30pm **Historic Vehicles Preservation Trust** – first Friday in the month October to May each year

There is now a list of regular activities and classes on the Notice Board that includes contact details.

July

- 4th **Cuckfield Dramatic Society Summer Ball**
10th **Cuckfield Flower Club**: Bright Ideas by Gill Homer 7.30pm

June

- 16th **Cuckfield Evening WI** – The Old School, 8pm. Clayton Tunnel North Portal by David Porter
20th **Glebe Road Community Fun Day** – 1-4pm
21st **Ansty Open Gardens** – 1.30-6pm
Combined admission £5
24th **Royal British Legion Women's Section**
Garden Party, venue to be arranged
28th **Cuckfield Open Gardens** – 2-6pm
Programmes £5 from Wealden Stores.
(Contact 01444 459579 or 01444 452395)

July

- 4th **Ensemble Reza concert** – Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield 7.30pm, pre-concert talk 6.15pm. Schubert's Quintet in C Major, Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata arranged for String Quintet and Boccherini's String Quintet Op 13 No 5. Tickets: adults £15 and £5 for under 18's. Available from Carousel Music, SWALK (Lindfield), Pepperbox and Wealden Stores (Cuckfield) www.ensemblereza.com
9th **Summer Evening Stroll** around Cuckfield with Museum Guide Richard Constable 6.30pm. Enjoy an evening walk in our beautiful village and learn about its fascinating history (bookings and information contact Phillipa Malins on 01444 452307)
14th **NHS Retirement Fellowship**: Outing to Polesden Lacey
15th **Singing Allsorts Summer Concert**
Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield 7.30–10pm. Local amateur, 50 voice, choir present their annual summer concert (raising funds for local charity Kerwin Court and Alzheimer's research). Tickets: £8 pre-booked or £10 on the door
21st **Cuckfield Evening WI** – The Old School 8pm. Birthday Dinner
25th **Staplefield Horticultural Society Annual Show**
Village Hall (Contact 01444 400236)
25th–2nd **The Adventurers' Art Club Annual Exhibition**:
King Edward Hall, High Street, Lindfield, West Sussex RH16 2HH. Sat. 25th July – Sat 1st August 10am–7pm. Sun 2nd August 10am–3.45pm

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