

Cuckfield Life

Inc. Brook St, Ansty & Staplefield

Local village talk,
by the village

Issue #5 : Mar/Apr 2013

Free

See Cuckfield wildlife on display

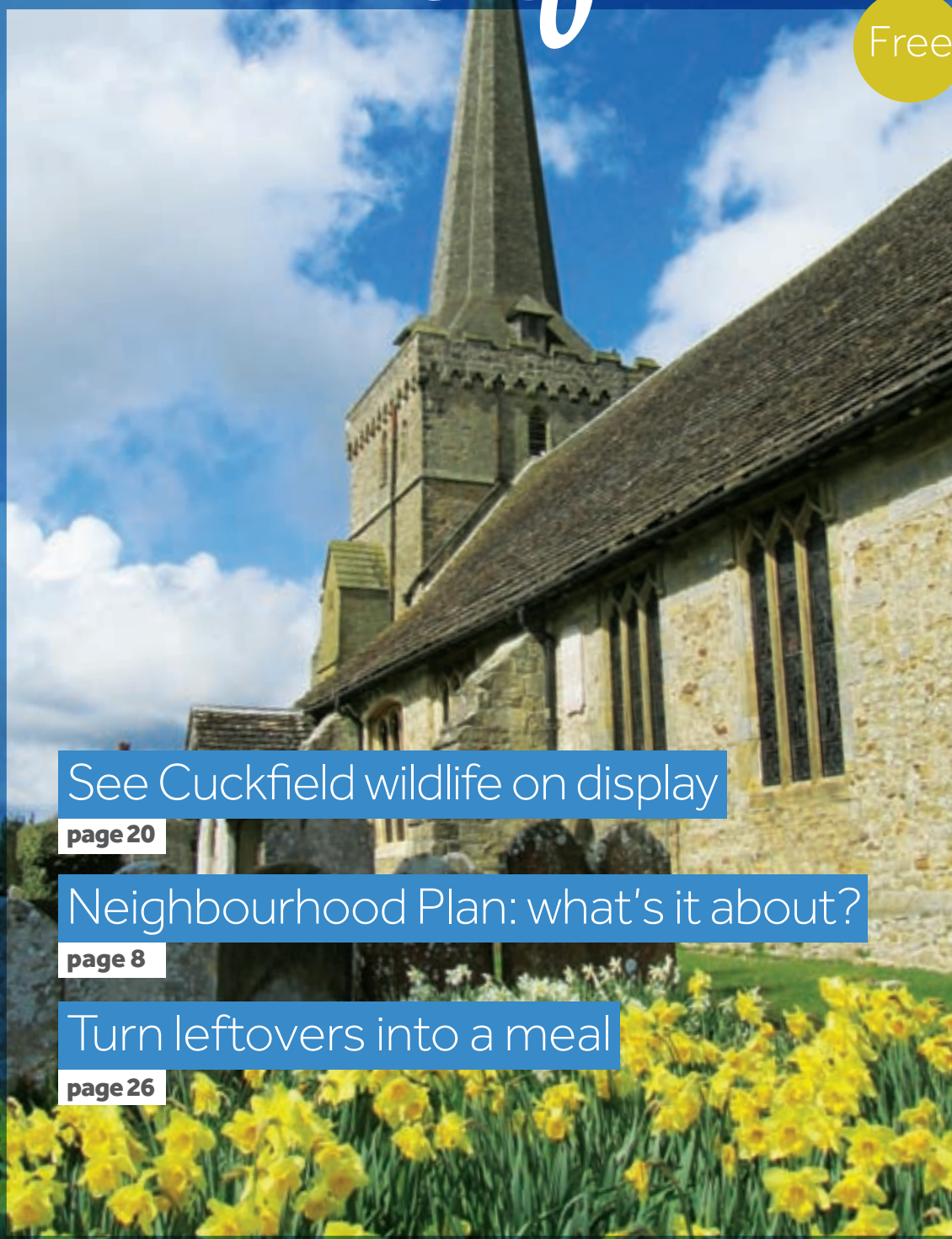
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By David Tingley, Editor

I've definitely seen some sun and felt warmth recently! This is certainly good news for most of us but that's not the only way we know Spring is approaching.

I'm delighted to say that we have a feature on the **wildlife** right here in Cuckfield by local resident and author **David Mortimer**. See **page 20** for tips on what to look out for.

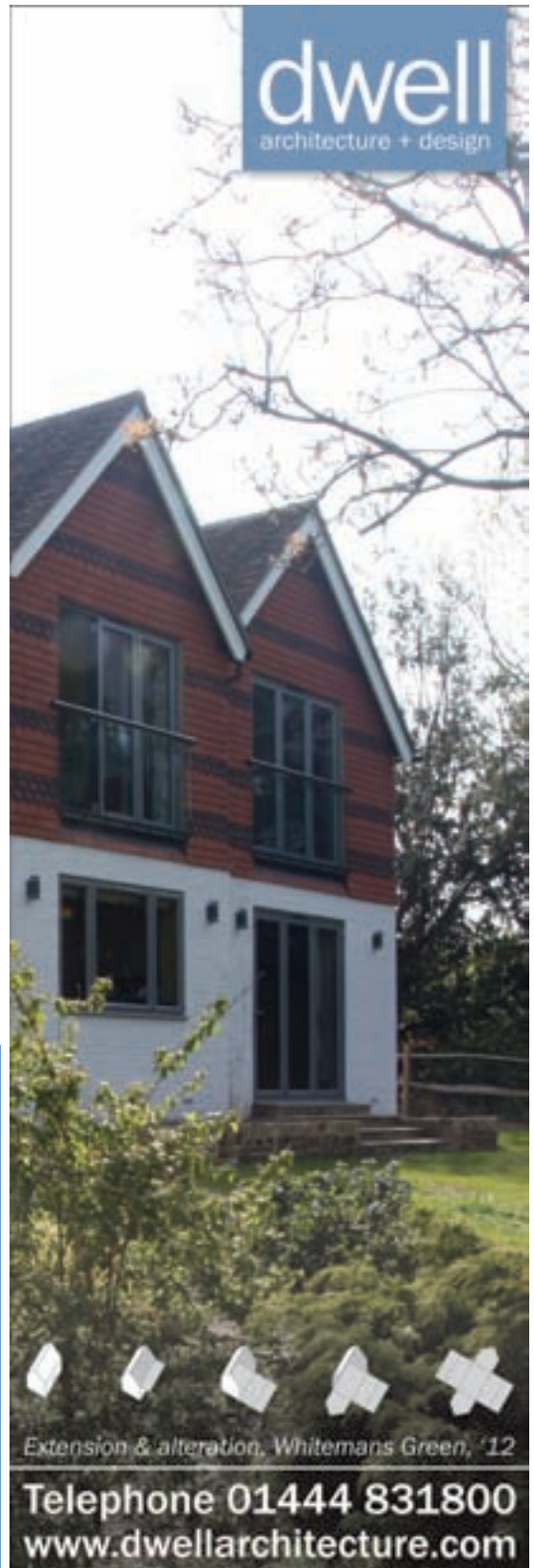
With the Spring comes runners in their droves. As promised we have featured a few **runners** from the village who are taking part in forthcoming **marathons** on **page 7**. Do support them if you are able to.

Claire Cooper met up with village singing legend **Jane Haughton** in this month's **Village People** on **page 16**. Finding out what makes people tick and what they've been up to is a big part of our remit in this magazine. Most of us are oblivious to the many talented and committed individuals who live around us. Village People is your chance to shine a bit of light on pockets of the community which don't always get noticed. Do feel free to email or call me with any suggestions please.

Another important remit is sharing **local information**, and on **page 8** we have lots of background about the **Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan** - which is currently out on consultation to the village. As you will see, this document has been important for local development already and it's still only in draft form. Find out more and have your say.

Of course we have the usual run of **news over the page** - which is always a pleasure to see as it comes in to us. Some will be surprised to learn that Cuckfield has its own **nuclear bunker** at all, let alone the fact that it's possible to take a look round it on open weekends. Take a look on **page 4** if you don't believe me!

There is just time for me to welcome **Caroline Whiteman**, our new **food** writer, who debuts this month on **page 26**. Thanks very much, Caroline.



Issue #5 – Mar/Apr 2013 –
3,000 copies printed

Next magazine copydate:
28th March 2013

Next magazine published:
15th April 2013

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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

European Association heads to Fine Arts & Lace museum

Enjoy a leisurely lunch in Calais, then a guided tour of the Calais Museum of Fine Arts and Lace. Cuckfield European Association have just a few places left for their coach trip to visit this famed museum on 20th April.

Contact Julie Bransden for further details and to book a place on the coach. Call 01444 413066 or email julienick35@talktalk.net

Cuckfield Karlstadt trip

Following the memorable and much enjoyed visit by our friends in our twin town of Karlstadt to Cuckfield back in 2010, it is now our turn! Between 7-10th June this year we have all been warmly invited to visit beautiful Karlstadt as guests of the town. It is a great opportunity to experience all that the local culture and countryside have to offer.

Some places are still available. The deadline for booking your place is Monday 1st April.

For further details, please contact Andrew Symonds at Cuckfield European Association on 01444 412409 or andrew.ajims@gmail.com

Nuclear Bunker open weekends in 2013

Cuckfield Museum is again helping to organise visits to the village's Cold War bunker.

The underground bunker was built in Cuckfield in 1962 as part of the Royal Observer Corps Post. It formed part of the Cold War early warning system and stayed in place until 1991 when the Post was closed. Mark Russell and Ed Coombes have restored the bunker to how it would have looked in 1991.

Open Weekend dates for 2013: June 22nd -23rd, July 27th-28th, Aug 24th -25th and Sept 28th -29th.

For more information and to book a place, please contact Phillipa Malins on 01444 452307.



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Above: The Mansell McTaggart team in the 2012 Darts Marathon

On a floral mission

Local freelance florist Belinda Campopiano is on a mission to help people make the most of the flowers they buy, and not just to unwrap and place them in a vase.

Belinda, who lives on the High Street, began working for herself 18 months ago after taking voluntary redundancy. She went on to study floristry at Plumpton College and hasn't looked back. Now she creates beautiful displays for weddings and private parties, as well as providing flower arranging demonstrations for groups and local meetings.

"My demos are fun with flowers," Belinda says. Differing from many florists, Belinda arranges without the use of floral foam. "I employ rather different mechanics, some old and some new, but they still get great results!"

The next opportunity to see Belinda is on Friday 22nd March at Jeremy's restaurant, Borde Hill Gardens with her 'Flowers for Spring' demo. Tickets and more info can be found on her website: www.chezfleur.co.uk

Double top for Darts comp

A Bull's Eye of £10,000 is the target for this year's Darts Marathon run by the Rotary Club of Cuckfield & Lindfield. This event has raised more than £100,000 over the last 13 years. This year the main charities are St Peter & St James Hospice and Chestnut Tree House Children's Hospice, plus other charities supported by Rotary.

Teams of six people throw darts for one hour to achieve the highest score. Serious darts teams are in it for the hot competition, while all sorts of other organisations, such as churches, businesses, clubs and pubs, raise teams just for a fun evening out. Rotarians keep score and ensure fair play.

The Darts Marathon will be run over February, March and April 2013. If you would like to take part, please contact the organisers: Alex Mackenzie 01444 483 465 email: a.j.mackenzie@btinternet.com and Geoff Dew 01444 414 456 email: gdedw@talktalk.net. More info: www.rotarysussex.org

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Residents go on the run

Local runners have been pounding the streets of Cuckfield and beyond as they train to take part in the London and Brighton marathons, motivated by the chance to raise money for charities. Here we meet some of them...

Reigning Cuckfield Walk champion **James Mark** is upping the pace and the distance by taking part in his first Brighton Marathon.

James, pictured proudly holding the cup he won as the winner of the five mile Easter Walk, will be raising money for Parkinsons UK.

"At the age of 47 this will be my first (and most definitely last!) marathon," he says. "The training has been as tedious as it has been challenging. During the week my lunch hour means a seven mile run. Every weekend involves one 2-3 hour shift out on the road and I have exhausted the musical options on my iPod!"

James, who has watched his younger brother run several marathons, has completed half marathons as well as winning the walking race last Easter. "I fancied a new and real challenge but am beginning to realise that 26 miles is a whole different level," he said.

You can sponsor James by visiting: uk.virginmoneygiving.com/JamesMark1



completed three London Marathons in 2001, 2003 & 2005, raising over £5,000 for Holy Trinity Junior School in Cuckfield, Dame Vera Lynn's Charity SOS and Newick House Special Needs School in Burgess Hill.

Another runner who is hoping to cheat injury and run the Brighton Marathon is **Shubs**

Here. Village resident and teacher at Warden Park School, Shubs suffered an injury during training with both back and knee problems. However, as we went to print, he informs us that he has managed to complete the Eastbourne Half Marathon. "The knee is a worry," he says, "but I will battle on for Brighton." Every penny Shubs raises will go to Cancer Research UK, one of the school's chosen charities this year.



Andrew, Jane and Paul Watson will be running in the Brighton Marathon in memory of their father, Leonard Watson, who died last year aged 79 years on 27th March in St Peter's & St James Hospice.

Andrew, Paul & Jane were all brought up locally and lived in Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill, along with their other siblings, Ellis, James & Juliet.

Andrew played for the local Haywards Heath Rugby Club for more than 30 years, where his son Jack still plays, and moved to Cuckfield in 1992.

Leonard worked for Lloyd's of London and was presented with the MBE in 1990. He spent his last few weeks in St Peter's & St James Hospice.

Andrew, Paul and Jane are hoping to raise between £1,800 & £3,000 for the hospice, whose mission is 'to provide specialist care, love and support for those living with progressive, life limiting illnesses from East and West Sussex'. If you knew Leonard, know Andrew, Paul or Jane or would like to sponsor them, visit www.justgiving.com/paulandjanewatson



Angela Smith is hoping to join the Watsons and raise funds for the hospice, providing she recovers from injury in time. A resident of Cuckfield for 20 years, Angela has



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Cuckfield in 20 years time?

CUCKFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

By Claire Cooper

Do you want to know what the future holds for Cuckfield over the next 20 years?

Luckily, you don't need a crystal ball to find out! Just log onto your computer or visit the Parish Council offices to take a look at the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

The plan has been drawn up to shape the future of the village and residents are currently being invited to have another say before the final version is submitted for approval.

Neighbourhood Plans were created as part of the Government's Localism Agenda, designed to give local people more say about what goes on in their area.

Through the plans, communities can influence decisions that will affect them on a day to day basis. For Cuckfield, this means ensuring that the village continues to thrive and meet the changing needs of the community, whilst preserving the distinctive character, landscape, and setting that has evolved over nine centuries of history.

Sponsored by Cuckfield Parish Council, the Draft Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by a team of parish councillors and community volunteers. The team started working on the project back in September 2011, making Cuckfield the first parish in Mid Sussex to begin developing its Neighbourhood Plan and part of a Government Front Runner program.

Nigel Page, chairman of the Parish Council, explains why councillors were so keen to grasp the opportunity to become a 'front runner'.

"Cuckfield has been given a very high housing allocation which could see the village doubling, possibly trebling in size," he said. "Clearly we have an obligation and duty to provide housing for local need but working on the plan gave us the opportunity to carry out our own housing needs survey to establish the type of homes

required. What we found is that there is a need for smaller houses and shared ownership."

He added that location was also a major concern and the plan has identified three areas suitable for housing development and set limits on the numbers of homes acceptable. "The aim is to enable development to the right places and ensure that Cuckfield retains its identity and distinctiveness," said Nigel.

Input from local people is crucial in forming Neighbourhood Plans, and Nigel has been impressed by the passion and commitment of his team.

"When we asked for volunteers to join the team we were delighted to discover people living in the village with the background, skills, knowledge and expertise we were looking for, combined with a real willingness to get involved and produce a robust plan for the village," said Nigel.

They include a housing officer, chartered surveyor and sustainability expert along with Andrew Metcalfe from Planning Aid who has since used the experience of working on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan to land his first job with Mid Sussex District Council.

Community groups, including the Cuckfield Society, Holy Trinity Church and local schools, have been key in reaching as many people as possible. "We have held three open days as part of our initial consultation to guide and structure our thinking," said Nigel. "This enabled us to produce our first piece of evidence - a community consultation paper which identifies key community requirements to shape the plan.

"This document reflects a remarkable investment of people's time, energy and commitment in getting the Plan to this stage," he added. "The plan gives a genuine local voice to the residents and community of Cuckfield in terms of planning for change and investment over the next 20 years."

The plan has already been successful in reducing the size of a housing development in Cuckfield

The draft plan has now been handed back to residents, who have a further chance to comment before it goes off to the government for inspection.

The plan highlights the importance of the two village centres, the High Street and Whitemans Green, while proposals include the creation of new allotments and the renovation of the former Youth Club building. There are also details of how traffic could be managed in the village, recreation and sports facilities developed and schools extended to meet the growing numbers and needs of pupils.

Promoting local business is also covered, along with protection of the countryside and wildlife habitats.

Once the plan has been legally accepted by a Government inspector and approved by the residents of Cuckfield through a referendum, it will be adopted by Mid Sussex District Council as the plan which must be used in law to determine planning applications in the Parish.

"By setting out a vision for the future of Cuckfield

Parish, along with clear planning policies, the plan will guide the long term future of the village and its surrounding countryside for the period 2011 to 2031," said Nigel.

He added that the plan has already been successful in reducing the size of a housing development in the village. "Mid Sussex District Council planning committee took on board the draft plan when considering an application to build 24 homes on land south of Ardingly Road," said Nigel. "As a result, the plans were scaled down to 14 houses and the remaining open space protected.

"This was a fantastic result for the village and proves that the Neighbourhood Plan is already proving to be effective."

Nigel recommends everyone takes a look at the draft plan, even if they feel they don't have any particularly strong views.

"This plan will affect everyone living in Cuckfield and will play a part in every decision made about the village in the future," he said. "This is a genuine opportunity to influence and determine how Cuckfield will evolve over the next 20 years and we want people to get involved."

The plan can be viewed on line at www.cuckfieldplan.com, with hard copies in the parish office.

All responses must be provided in writing and can be emailed to info@cuckfieldplan.com or posted to: Cuckfield Parish Council, The Queen's Hall, High Street, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5EL.

The consultation period closes on 29th March.

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Jim Revell



Cuckfield villagers and former pupils and staff from Warden Park School have been mourning the loss of popular deputy head Jim Revell who has died, aged 87.

We are pleased to be able to tell Jim's story using extracts from the eulogy written by his family and read at his funeral.

'Life is for the living' was a motto by which Jim Revell lived his life. He was a man with a broad range of interests, great humour, a passion for learning and a fine all-round sportsman.

Jim excelled at football, playing in goal as a junior with Brighton and Hove Albion and later for other major clubs. He was still playing local football (for Cuckfield F.C. and Cuckfield Town F.C.) well into his forties. As a PE teacher Jim inspired generations of young sportsmen and women. One of his many roles was as manager of the East Sussex Schools Athletics team, coaching many fine athletes, including Olympian Steve Ovett from Brighton.

Jim also enjoyed 'treading the boards' in amateur dramatics, Scottish dancing and, in later years, cooking a range of dishes.

Jim grew up in Whitemans Green, was a Boy Scout, a choirboy at Cuckfield church and played football and cricket locally. He also boxed. A good scholar, he attended Hove Grammar School. Journeys to school and back, during the Blitz and the early years of World War Two, were not uneventful. Jim watched dog-fights between RAF fighters and Luftwaffe aircraft as a back-drop to his studies. Perhaps motivated by these experiences, he joined the Air Training Corps.

While still at school Jim's goalkeeping ability was recognised by Brighton and Hove Albion.

An RAF scholarship took Jim to St. Andrews University, Scotland, in 1943, where he completed a year of his studies before being inducted into the Air Force to train as a pilot. He also kept goal for Dundee United.

Jim got his RAF Pilot's Wings in 1946 but as the War had ended, and fewer pilots were needed, he retrained as a PE teacher at Loughborough College and started his teaching career in Sussex.

In 1950 Jim married his first wife, Etta, in Cuckfield and settled in the High Street. Sons Jamie and Andy were born in 1951 and 1953.

He also became the star goalkeeper with Haywards Heath Football Club.

Sadly Etta died suddenly in 1956 and Jim had a major challenge on his hands, continuing with his teaching career and bringing up two small boys. He was aided by his mother Jane, who eventually took them to live with her in Brook Street.

As the boys were growing up a new secondary school opened in the town. Cuckfield County Secondary School, later to become Warden Park, welcomed its first pupils in 1956. Jim was appointed as PE Master and remained at the school for 32 years, ending his time there as Deputy Head.

In 1960 he married Jill, who had been a PE student-teacher at the school. In 1962 Patrick arrived, a brother for Jamie and Andy.

For decades Jim and Jill were part of the furniture at Cuckfield Secondary School, then later Warden Park. Hundreds, if not thousands, of young people who went through the school remember them with affection.

In their holidays, then later in their retirement, Jim and Jill travelled extensively, including a trip to Malaysia where Jill had lived as a child. Jill sadly died in 2001.

Some time after becoming a widower again, Jim met a friend called Eily, who he had known many years previously. The friendship was rekindled and they married in New Zealand. Eily sadly died two years ago.

Jim had three daughters-in-law (Lynda, Jane and Jackie), nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He always took an interest in the children's studies, sports, hobbies and general development.

Despite his failing health, Jim remained mentally sharp and alert right until the end and he will always be remembered by his large family with love and gratitude.

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Walking race gets going

The annual walking race started out in 1927 as a "challenge" between E.Jard and F.Hoadley walking to Bolney and back. They walked "fully" dressed (Collar and Tie). The event has been held each year since, except for the odd break not least of which being during WW2.

There have been several different routes used over the years but the current five mile circular course starts at Cuckfield Rec – Ansty – Deaks Lane – Whitemans Green and finishing back at the Rec. The Independent State of Cuckfield started organising the event in the 1960s.

Some of the older residents can remember prizes such as a roasting joint, sack of coal, cartload of manure etc being awarded but we now have cups and medals for

the various individual and team categories.

The event is open to all aged over 16 years but only Cuckfield residents can win any of the individual cups. Teams can be entered by any Cuckfield club, society or institution and can have as many individuals (resident or not) as you like, with the total of the fastest three times counting.

This year the race falls on April Fool's Day (Mon 1st April), so walkers who choose to can wear fancy dress and the Mayor will award a prize to whichever she judges the best. The entry fee is £2 and walkers can just turn up on the day. Registration is from 9.15 to 9.45am. Competitors start at 10am. For more info email independent_state_of_cuckfield@hotmail.com



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Community gardening show just keeps getting bigger



With an entry from Warden Park in the Strictly Schools Challenge and resident Ryma Skeen of De Novo Flowers giving flower arranging workshops, Cuckfield will have plenty of interest in 'Strictly Come Gardening', the Gardening show held in Haywards Heath's Orchards Shopping Centre on Saturday 27th April.

All the local schools are expecting to shine in the Challenge. Younger children are being asked to paint a picture of their favourite tree, while Key Stage 2 children will be creating their "Edible Metre", a mini kitchen garden. Each school has been provided with a standard wooden pallet, compost and seeds to design and plant a plot one metre square with the most imaginative and productive cropping plan.

The Lord Lieutenant of West Sussex, Susan Piper, will open the event, where the high spot will be the celebrity expert panel chaired by Jean Griffin, BBC Radio Sussex and Surrey's gardening guru. Featuring on the team will be Head Gardeners Martin Duncan of Arundel Castle, Tom Brown of Parham House, and Andy Stevens of Borde Hill, as well as Peter Holman, Chair of the London In Bloom and South & South East in Bloom Committees. With collective knowledge like that on hand, there'll be no gardening rune which cannot be unearthed. The panel will be on parade at 11am and 1pm.

Exhibitors will include the great Sussex gardens, plant specialists, nurseries, schools and colleges, as well as some local horticultural societies. The lead feature will be a flower arranging teach-in from Ryma Skeen. How many of us feel threatened by that beautiful bouquet just given to us? Ryma will show just how a few simple ideas can turn the ordinary into a masterpiece.

Other features include a Gardening Treasure Hunt, with clues hidden in the shops in the Orchards, and a 'fun' quiz, "Know your Plants". Regulars at Age Concern's Redwood Centre in Haywards Heath will be creating brilliant floral displays in wheelbarrows, sponsored by the Orchards Shopping Centre.

For more information, contact Ruth on 01444 453399, or e-mail her at ruth@i-dmc.co.uk.

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Jane Haughton

VILLAGE PEOPLE



By Claire Cooper

From the Military Wives to the postal workers of Bristol, thousands of people across the country are experiencing the joy of singing together and many describe joining a choir as the best decision they ever made.

Now professional singer and Cuckfield mum Jane Haughton is spreading the joy in Sussex as she brings communities together to sing.

Jane is probably best known in the village for founding the popular 'Singing Allsorts' but few know that Jane has also been involved with choirs for people from all walks of life, including inmates from Wandsworth prison.

"That was one of the jobs I have most enjoyed and found hardest to leave when we moved from London down to Sussex," said Jane. "It was extremely rewarding and I would love to do it again – in fact perhaps Lewes Prison needs a choir!"

Jane's passion for music began when she was a child. "I went to a school where everyone was encouraged to sing or play an instrument and I learnt the piano and violin," said Jane, who went on to Trinity College to train as a piano teacher.

"I was actually more interested in singing but was advised to wait until my voice had developed, so I decided to study languages, moved to Italy and stayed for five years."

While in Milan, Jane took singing lessons and tried to give up because: 'I didn't think I had what it takes to become a professional singer.'

But life without singing was almost unbearable. "It felt as if something very major was missing from my life," she said. A few months later when she moved south to Naples she began singing baroque music as part of an ensemble specialising in unearthing early Neapolitan church music.

This proved to be a turning point for Jane, who returned to England determined to study singing. "I studied in London and began singing with small companies," said Jane, who also completed a post graduate course in America. She also co-founded Garden Opera – a travelling opera company which toured the country performing in the open air.

Jane's talents soon landed her a dream job at the Royal Opera House – something of a surprise as she was eight months pregnant. "I didn't plan to work full time but I made a mistake on the application form," said Jane. "I was offered the job, given maternity leave and ended up staying for seven years!" During this time Jane also got involved through the ROH Education Department in co-leading educational workshops, often in schools, and at family workshops at the Opera House itself – her first taste of bringing people together to sing.

"It was an amazing time for me," said Jane, who worked alongside TV choir master Gareth Malone and other talented directors.

"I realised that this was what I really loved doing, so I made the decision to 'jump ship', leave my secure job and nice salary and go freelance. And I'm happy to say that I've never looked back!"

When Jane moved with her family to Sussex she joined the staff at Ardingly College, teaching music and working with the school choirs through West Sussex Music Service.

Within three months of setting up home in Cuckfield, she had also formed the 'Singing Allsorts'. "I found there was a niche for a local choir and put some posters on lamp posts around the village," she said. "I wondered if it would take off but it has grown and developed far beyond what I ever dreamt and we've now capped numbers at 50 and have a waiting list!"

The choir performs concerts in the village and is also invited to sing in residential and nursing homes and at fundraising events in the area.

Jane also runs one of the choirs at Holy Trinity Primary School. "I love teaching children, the infants are great fun to work with as they have absolutely no inhibitions and are hugely enthusiastic!"

Jane explained why she is so passionate about bringing people together to sing. "I've seen first hand how music can enhance lives – it lifts the spirits, revitalises and helps people feel better about themselves," she said.

This has been particularly evident in the work Jane has been involved in with people with dementia and their carers. Four years ago Jane joined an opera project at Glyndebourne and out of this came a regular choir called 'Raise Your Voice' in Lewes. "The project," Jane says, "brings people together who can often feel isolated and lonely and it gives them a safe, social activity in which to engage which is fun, improves their well-being both physically and emotionally and helps them to feel more valued. It is wonderful work."

Helping to run a choir at Wandsworth prison was equally rewarding. "I wrote to the prison chaplain who ran the hymn practise sessions asking if I could run an opera project," said Jane. "We ended up doing a whole range of workshops including gospel music.



"It was a unifying and uplifting experience. Prisoners would go back to their cells singing. We even had the first ever standing ovation at the carol service! Everyone felt an enormous sense of achievement."

Plans are now afoot to set up another choir in Cuckfield - a Seniors Singing Club for over-60s. The idea for this venture came from one of the Singing Allsorts members, Sarah Cheesmur. "We are hoping that the choir will be launched after Easter and will be run independently but be supported by the Singing Allsorts," said Jane. Look out for posters!!

"One of the things that most excites me," says Jane (taking a feather from Gareth's cap) "is bringing different people together through singing". A highlight last year for Jane was helping to set up a community choir in Cuckfield to perform in a church concert as part of the school's 500th anniversary celebrations. "The choir brought together children, staff, past pupils and villagers aged from 6 to 86," said Jane. "It was brilliant fun."

Looking to the future, Jane says she would like to organise more community concerts in the surrounding area, bringing different groups of people together. "Singing is so good for you - everyone should have a go! I'm on a mission to get as many people singing as possible!" Viva la Voce in Cuckfield!

Springtime start for senior singers!

You are NEVER too old to sing and have fun! Have you ever thought you would like to sing in a relaxed friendly group? Have you heard of the local singing group, the Singing Allsorts? They are launching a Senior Singing Club with Jane Haughton (the Singing Allsorts maestro) leading the group.

The group is looking for men and women from the Cuckfield area, who would like to get together, twice a month, to join a friendly and relaxed singing group.

Develop new skills, learn new songs and meet friends - whether you read sheet music or not, members would be delighted to see you. Scientifically proven - singing will improve your health and well-being.

Come along to FREE taster session on 19th April.

- Alternate Fridays from 26th April
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- Cost - £3 a session

For more information and to join please call Sarah Cheesmur on 01444 455156 or sarahcheesmur@hotmail.com

Rather not sing? Prefer to accompany the group on the piano? We are looking for a volunteer to play alongside the group, working with Jane.

Doing our 'bit'

VILLAGE GREEN

by Helly Eaton, Cuckfield Local

Yesterday I saw one of those magic things that reminds me how good it is to live here in Cuckfield. Walking over muddy fields with my dog, there was suddenly a vast mass of seagulls overhead, swooping and spiralling and looking for a landing spot. The sea of gulls glided down in a synchronised landing that'd make any airline pilot proud, and soon the whole field was awash in rippling 'white waves'.

Gulls may get a poor press down on the coast but they certainly brighten up a dull damp day here in Cuckfield.

It just shows how important our countryside is. We're increasingly aware these green spaces are vital not only for our own human livelihoods and well-being but also for the wildlife who share it.

The constant threat of new building on green land has been exercising many people in the village recently and it's both helpful and hopeful that the new Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan has been busy reflecting local residents' views on the future of the village.

With wildlife and the future in mind, Cuckfield Local's Bee Friends group is buzzing with new plans. The emphasis is on encouraging planting bee-friendly flowers to create blooms all year round, as many bees have a particularly hard time late summer and autumn when summer flowers are going over. Some solitary bees are still buzzing about in September and October, so late-flowering species are especially beneficial.

The Bee Friends group created the wild flower garden in the Recreation Ground and are now working on a new bed on the opposite side of the entrance too. As well as stunning to look at, these nectar-rich flowers are vital for bees and other pollinating insects. A recent study reported: "Insect pollination is crucial for the healthy development of our favourite foods, from apples and avocados to cucumbers and onions. Of the 100 crop species that provide 90 per cent of the global population's food, nearly three-quarters rely on pollination by bees."

Sounds like it's time for us all to do our bit. If you're inspired to plant wild flowers, don't miss our Seed Swap stall at the market (next one 13th April, 10am-1pm, Talbot courtyard). Whether you swap or donate, you'll find some great seeds and useful advice to get you started.

The market itself is growing bigger and better, with even more stalls offering local produce. People seem to love its 'community spirit' as they come to buy fresh breads, vegetables, cheeses, meats etc. I could go on!

The 'Waste Watch' group is collecting plastic milk bottle tops at the market for recycling (please bring yours down) and also encouraging us to reuse those margarine tubs and other plastic packaging that doesn't go into the blue bins. One good idea is to bring your own recycled containers for goods you buy at the market.

There's lots of info about this and more at the Cuckfield Local stall, so come along and say 'Hi...'



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Go wild in the Spring

CUCKFIELD WILDLIFE

As Spring comes upon us, local resident and wildlife enthusiast David Mortimer opens up a few secrets that can remain hidden at this time of year until, that is, we go looking for it. David has lived in the village for 16 years and has written a number of books, including 'Sussex Wildlife'. He has also worked as a volunteer with the Sussex Wildlife Trust.

By David Mortimer

According to the old saying, March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. If that holds good this year then over the coming weeks the birds will be singing their hearts out and the earlier woodland wild flowers appearing. There's a connection, of course. Most birdsong may be attractive to our ears but to the birds themselves it's strictly utilitarian – a means of proclaiming one's territory and attracting a mate. And there's little point in finding a mate and producing a batch of chicks if the growing season is delayed by bad weather and there's too little food for the new arrivals.

Even so, some birds start pegging out their territories surprisingly early. Around the beginning of January you could have heard great spotted woodpeckers hammering out with their beaks five rapid beats, pausing for a response and then issuing another challenge. But now we're in March and next month will be awaiting the first calls of the male cuckoo – because it's only the male that delivers the familiar cuc-oo sound and what he's wanting is a response from a female that can best be described as a kind of bubbling sound. Nationally there is great concern about cuckoo numbers, which have fallen dramatically over the past decade. Nobody is yet certain whether the problem is in the savannas and forests of the Congo and West Africa, where they spend the winter, or the result of a decline in the insects and caterpillars they feed on in Britain. In the last two years a single male cuckoo has been heard calling in the Millennium Wood, and another around the edges of New England Wood, so we must keep fingers firmly crossed in the hope that this year the familiar call is heard again.

Another much loved April arrival from Africa, the swallow, is also suffering a decline in numbers. Fifteen years ago, for example, it was not unusual to see up to thirteen pairs swooping across the Whitemans Green playing fields or lining the telegraph wires in September preparatory to migration. Last year there were only two pairs. As with the cuckoo we cannot be sure of the root cause. Possibly more intensive farming practices, including the grubbing up of hedgerows, and the scarcity of insects are to blame, or it may be that the conversion of so many old barns into houses has robbed them of nest sites. Whatever the cause, any sightings of these acrobatic birds is to be treasured.





Photo: Peter Lovett

Of all our songbirds the nightingale is the most celebrated but until last year it had not been heard for quite some time in the immediate surrounds of Cuckfield. Then, in 2012, it was heard again – both in Blunts Wood and in the Millennium Wood. It's not a bird that is easy to see, being an undistinguished 'little brown job' that hides deep in bushes, but its rich singing is done mainly in April and May. Its name gives rise to a common misapprehension that it sings only at night. In fact it keeps going in daylight hours as well, but by then it's in competition with all the other songsters who are after a mate or defending their patch, so for its human audience night-time offers the opportunity to hear its song at its clearest.

Spring is not just about birds though and, whilst the primroses have been and gone, the woodland flowers are about to come into their own. If the cold wet weather that started the year gives way to 'normal' spring weather, then by now the wood anemones that carpet New England Wood should be in full swing, their white heads nodding in unison in the gentle breeze, earning them the popular name of wind flowers. In quick succession, as we move through April, come the bluebells, the pinky-white cuckoo-flowers and the yellow archangels. If you want to seek out a spectacular display of bluebells in some other wood than New England, try Nymans Wood. About a hundred yards past the NT entrance to Nymans House and Gardens is a public footpath which drops steeply into the bottom of the valley. There you have a choice of tracks – left along the floor of the ghyll or right on a gentle upward path that takes you through the beeches past a prolific display of bluebells, usually at their best in the last ten days or so of April. These, of course, are English bluebells, with narrow leaves and drooping heads of gentle blue, not the strident Spanish variety with erect flower-head and a colour that is anything but delicate.

The cuckoo-flower, also called lady's smock, will scatter itself singly or in clumps almost anywhere and if you happen to be driving from Warninglid to Plummers Plain in late April or early May you'll see a wonderful bank of them on your left about half way along. But I've saved the best, at least in my eyes, till last. Yellow archangels belong to the (dead) nettle family but they have clusters of pretty yellow flowers around the base of each pair of leaves. In theory they flower in May and June. In practice, at least in most years in New England Wood, they come earlier and it's not unusual to find bluebells and yellow archangels growing happily together. Better still they are a recognised indicator of undisturbed woodland and their presence in large numbers confirms that 'our' Wood has indeed graced the village for a long time.

Top photos (L to R): Cuckoo-flowers just off the patch, a snatched shot of a Swallow, Yellow Archangels with Bluebells in the background and a close-up of Wood Anemones in New England Wood.

Cuckfield Union Workhouse still lives on in village museum



The Workhouse circa 1909

The curators at Cuckfield Museum have decided to expand a display about the workhouse to reflect a few of the harsh realities of life for the poor before the introduction of old-age pensions or other benefits.

The able-bodied were expected to work for their keep by, for example, breaking stones for road-mending, picking oakum, cleaning or laundry work. All "casuals" (vagrants) were required to have a bath before they were given a meal and a bed for the night. Only resident paupers over the age of 70 were excused manual work. Local newspapers reported complaints and even violent disorder over the standard of workhouse food.

In the late 1920s the new young manager, Joseph Blunden, sought to improve conditions for the inmates and drew up

architectural plans which can be seen at the museum.

Younger Cuckfield residents may not know that the workhouse became a Canadian military hospital in the Second World War and then a much-loved local General Hospital until its closure in 1991 when many of the original buildings were still in use. Today only the Victorian main block, two lodges and the chapel remain, as part of what is now the Chapelfields housing development.

The museum holds detailed architectural plans of the building and an extensive collection of photographs relating to the site as both workhouse and hospital. There is more information on our website www.cuckfieldmuseum.org

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Dog poo, litter etc

FROM THE MAYOR'S TABLE

By Lindy Elphick

Time for a change of pace for this month's column – I hope you don't mind but I am going to have a moan! If you have read my previous columns you will know how passionate I am about Cuckfield and how lucky I think we are to live here. So why – tell me – do some people just not have any respect for their wonderful surroundings?

I notice that Cuckfield.org had a moan about dog poo recently – and rightly so. We have a dog (the lovely Lottie) and walk her out in the surrounding woods and fields twice a day. Yesterday I walked over the recreational ground and there were three lots of dog poo on the Rec that some owners must think it is not their responsibility to pick up. Please, please, please – if you are exercising your dog on Cuckfield Rec, Whitemans Green or along the streets of our village be vigilant and pick up YOUR dog's poo! The number of people you see texting or chatting on their mobiles, not taking a blind bit of notice that their dog is fouling a public area. As for those who do take their dog out for a walk out in the fields and woods, then pick up their dog poo and hang it on a branch or toss it into a hedge – what is that all about? If they think bio-degradable bags will just disappear in a few days – think again.

However, errant dog owners are not the only ones to leave a mess in the parks. I have been amazed over the years that when the football season starts the Rec is littered with rubbish and sticky tape from their games. Even if the visiting team members are disrespectful to their surroundings – surely our local teams and support staff have a sense of duty to collect up the debris created by the players and supporters?

Finally – the huge bug bear – litter. Always particularly bad after a school inset day/half term, a sunny bank holiday or when we have had enough snow for sledging. Parents – please can you teach your children to look after our fabulous countryside and parks – it is there for us all to enjoy. Why on earth do people take the time to go for a walk in our lovely countryside and then leave behind sweet wrappers, tin cans, plastic bottles etc etc..... mind numbingly stupid! This week I returned from a dog walk with a large bag of rubbish found en route. I think everyone who uses the open spaces around us has a responsibility for its upkeep.



So you see – I'm not just a smiley smiley Mayor – I can moan as well! I just hope that some of those who cause the above offences read this column and take some notice.

Go on – have a go!



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Decor inspired from India

DESIGN AT HOME

By Fiona Evans, Limited Editions

I have always loved rich colours and luxurious textures and in the right quantities set against a neutral background these can be used to generate an exciting one-off interior. I found such fabrics on holiday in India, where striking colours are used widely in everyday life. I've read that colours in clothing varies depending on the area of India, religion and ceremony but the women we saw who were not wearing western clothes wore beautiful saris and Punjabi suits (long tunics with loose trousers) in bold, striking and shimmering colours, sometimes embellished in gold. Gold and silver printing by hand, using a brass stencil, is a traditional finish for both dyed and printed fabrics and adds further glimmer. In the Indian state of Rajasthan, women wear bright, vibrant colours, dazzling in the daylight and the men wear vivid turbans, almost fluorescent pinks and greens.

Wood carvings, hand woven rugs, stunning embroideries and an expertise in recycling have made India a hub for art and craft. Age old traditions and skills passed down the generations have created a wealth of craftsmanship in many fields. Some are demonstrated in charity craft markets, where pieces are sold to support the many charities from all over India. We watched a young woman weave part of a stunning rug using a loom that would grace a museum for social history here.

I find embroidered fabrics particularly appealing and the amount of work that goes into the finished article is fantastic, using silks and wools that are hand dyed in muted or bright colours. Hand block dyed prints in bold colours, silver and gold make gorgeous accessories such as cushions and throws, with curtains made from embroidered silk adding a luxurious edge.

Our journey started in Old Delhi where there is a lot to take in; bustling and crowded you take your life in your hands trying to cross the road. Street food cooked on the edge of the streets wherever there is space can often be appealing, sometimes unrecognizable but always creative in its display.

Some sights in Delhi are not the best, as portrayed in the media, but others are unusual or spectacular. The roads are a form of madness with nine lanes of traffic squashed into the allocated three. Auto rickshaws (tuk tuks), like bumper cars driven amongst cars, buses and the occasional cow, are often stuffed with far too many passengers including packs of exquisitely turned out school children. Trucks, cars, motorbikes carrying a whole family, cycle rickshaws and overladen vehicles of all descriptions with gravity-defying cargo make quite a spectacle.

In the main streets, alleyways and markets there are shops selling crafts and art work using Indian resources or work inspired by Indian life. I love the unusual and colourful articles you can source for your home, beautiful fabrics for curtains or blinds, just a touch here and there to add a new dimension.



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Using leftovers again

ON YOUR TABLE

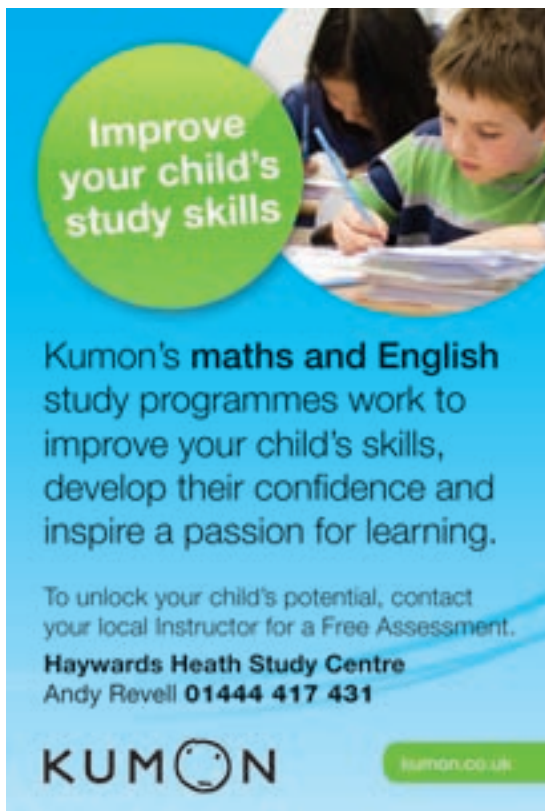
Use it up! Pesto Sauce

Substituting the classic pesto ingredients of basil, pine nuts and parmesan for leftover bagged salad leaves, spinach or rocket, mixed nuts and cheddar offers a simple, tasty and cheap alternative to the classic Italian sauce. This recipe should serve two.

1. Blend all the ingredients in a food processor until combined to desired consistency. If you don't have a blender, you can do this by chopping very finely and then mixing everything in a bowl.
2. To use on pasta, stir into just-drained pasta.
3. If you want to thin out the sauce to spread it better, save a little bit of the pasta water and add it in.

Ingredients:

- 1 big handful of mixed green leaf (such as rocket, watercress and spinach)
- 1 large playing card pack sized piece of cheese
- 1 handful of nuts (toasted hazelnuts, cashews or almonds)
- 1 clove crushed garlic
- 50ml olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste



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Leftovers have developed an unappetizing image over the years. Seen as boring, dull and the last resort for a meal, they get pushed further back in the fridge and neglected until it's too late and they must be tossed in the bin. The truth is, using up your leftovers is common sense; better for the planet and your pocket.

There are lots of delicious dishes that work brilliantly with leftovers. Here are a couple of recipes from local food producer and chutney queen Caroline Whiteman, so that nothing need go to waste the next time you have some bits left over.



Spanish Omelette

Ingredients:

225g leftover potatoes
(boiled new potatoes or roast potatoes)
1 onion
15g butter
2 tablespoons olive oil
Select the leftover cooked veg you want to use: e.g. celery, peppers, courgette, broad beans, broccoli, mushrooms, spinach, carrots, peas, squash, sweetcorn...
60g cheddar cheese (optional)
4 free range eggs
2 tablespoons water or milk
salt and pepper
1 tablespoon chopped parsley or basil (optional)

1. Cut your leftover potatoes into chunks or slices.
2. Peel and slice the onion. Melt the butter and oil in a large non-stick frypan and fry the onion over a low heat for 8 minutes. Then add the potatoes and fry for another couple of minutes – but don't let them get too brown. Add your leftover vegetables to the pan.
3. Grate the cheese, if using.
4. Turn on the grill to pre-heat it. Beat the eggs with the milk or water, a little salt and pepper, and tip in the contents of the frypan plus half the cheese and the chopped herbs. Mix well. Wipe the pan and heat a little more oil and butter in it until it starts to foam. Tip in the egg and veg mixture.
5. Cook over a low heat for about 10 minutes; as the egg sets around the edge, tilt the pan to allow the liquid egg to flow underneath.
6. Sprinkle remaining cheese over the top and place the pan under the pre-heated grill for a few minutes until the egg is set and the cheese starts to bubble and turn brown.
7. Loosen around the edges and turn out onto a plate or serve directly from the pan.

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This year the award-winning Borde Hill Garden celebrates one and half centuries of gardening history. The vision of one man and his love affair with nature led to the establishment of one of the most beautiful gardens in Britain. Today plant enthusiasts can visit Borde Hill and still experience the passion and knowledge which led Colonel Stephenson R Clarke (SRC) and the Great Victorian Plant Hunters to collect flora and fauna from every corner of the globe.

To celebrate this sesquicentennial anniversary, Head Gardener Andy Stevens and his team will this year plant a selection of shrubs and trees to reintroduce a number of the original varieties established by SRC which have since been lost to harsh weather. What's more, a unique exhibition sharing the life and explorations of the Colonel will be open to the public sometimes this year.

The House was originally built in 1598 by Stephen Borde, the grandson of Andrew Borde one of Henry VIII's courtiers and a leading physician, and the garden was planted with mainly medicinal species. Borde Hill House was extended considerably in 1720, 1840 and 1890s. Each extension was added with great care to ensure the original character of the house remained unspoilt.

The Stephenson Clarke family purchased the House in 1892 and the family's fourth generation still lives there today. Visitors to Borde Hill Garden are able to explore the history and splendour of Borde Hill House themselves by pre-booking a group visit between May and June.

Borde Hill is a Grade II* listed Garden, set in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with spectacular vistas across the Ouse Valley Viaduct. When, in 1892, SRC bought Borde Hill House it had only eight acres of land. Over the next fifty years SRC increased his land holding to 21,000 acres by the time he died.

The Colonel was a great naturalist, with botanical interest and garden design playing equally important roles. He started planting the Garden from 1893 and

in 1898 extended the South Lawn and created the Ha-Ha. He sponsored many expeditions by the great plant collectors to China, Burma, Tasmania and the Andes. The Garden contains many unusual trees, with about 8,000 trees and shrubs listed in the Tree Registry. Borde Hill Garden was planted in a series of intimate outdoor 'rooms', which include the Azalea Ring (1912), Garden of Allah (1922) and sub-tropical Dells. Later were added Jay Robin's Rose Garden, the Mediterranean and Italian Gardens. The Rose Garden, created in 1996, was designed by RHS Gold Medallist Robin Williams and planted with over 600 scented David Austin roses. The Rose Garden was featured on the front cover of Sussex Life magazine last year and remains a key attraction at Borde Hill.

Beyond the formal Garden are magical woodlands with giant rhododendrons and carpeted with bluebells - ideal for tranquil walks to enjoy the fauna and flora. There is also a new Adventure Playground for children and scenic lakes stocked with fish for the fishing club.

Borde Hill Garden continues to be a gem in the English countryside and over the years has received numerous awards including the South East Tourism award in 1999 and the Historic Houses Association/Christies award in 2004.

Each year there is a series of events, including gardening, musical, sculpture exhibition and watercolour and equestrian events, attracting people from across the country and beyond.

Cafe Elvira and Jeremy's Restaurant, which won the Good Food South East award and best Sussex Young Chef Award are ideal for fine dining and complete the huge amount that Borde Hill has to offer.

Borde Hill is open from 23rd March - 3rd November. Becoming a Friend of Borde Hill Garden is only £25.00 per adult and £15.00 per child and gives unlimited access during the season.

Call 01444 450326 or visit www.bordehill.co.uk

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What's on this month

AT THE QUEEN'S HALL

MARCH

15th **NSPCC Quiz Night** 7.30pm
Teams of 6. Bar and raffle. Tickets £11pp available from Wealden Stores to include a hot supper and delicious puddings.

22nd **Cuckfield Crafts and Market** 9.30am - 1pm

APRIL

11th **"The Ouse from Source to Sea"** 8pm
Popular speaker Geoff Mead uses his knowledge and skills as a geographer, social historian and photographer to trace the course of the Ouse, our 'local' river, as it makes its way through Sussex to the sea in this illustrated talk

To book your place contact Ann Went
events@cuckfieldmuseum.org 01444 450982

12th **Vintage Fair** 10am to 4pm

26th **Cuckfield Crafts and Market** 9.30am - 1pm

ADVANCE NOTICE: 11th May - Cuckfield Pre School Playgroup will be holding a **James Bond Casino night**. Watch this space for more next month!

AND ELSEWHERE

MARCH

17th **Mobile Waste Collection**, Broad St Car Park
10am - Midday

21st 2 30pm **Mid Sussex National Trust Association**
talks by Tom Cole 'the Ancient Tree Hunt'
Clair Hall, Haywards Heath. 01444 457648

27th **Ladies Fashion Show** at Cuckfield Golf Centre

APRIL

1st **Walking Race** - 5 mile course from Cuckfield Rec.
Registration from 9.15am. Start from 10am
£2 entry. Organised by The Independent State of Cuckfield.

1st **Easter Egg Hunt** (for under 10s!)
Free entry. 10.30am at Cuckfield Rec

13th **Cuckfield Local Food Market**, 10am - 1pm,
Talbot Courtyard

21st **The Greater Haywards Heath Bike Ride**
Register at The Orchards Shopping Centre, HH,
on Sat 20th April from 11am-3pm.
More info: www.hhbikeride.co.uk



CUCKFIELD VINTAGE EMPORIUM
11am - 4pm
QUEEN'S HALL
High St., Cuckfield
Friday 12th April 2013

A FANTASTIC ASSORTMENT OF STALL HOLDERS OFFERING VINTAGE HOME & GARDEN WARES, COLLECTABLES AND CLOTHING... £1 ENTRANCE

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Haywards Heath Music Society
71st Season 2012-2013
13th Apr 2013: **NEXT CONCERT**
MARK BEBBINGTON (piano)



This highly-regarded artist will play a selection of works by John Ireland, marking 50 years since the composer's death, as well as more familiar pieces, including Schubert's last sonata.

11th May 2013: **THE JACQUIN TRIO**
The Jacquin Trio (clarinet, viola and piano) have been together since 2009, winning several important prizes, including the recent St Martin's Chamber Music Competition. Their concert will include Mozart's well-known *Kegelstatt* trio.



Both concert start at 7.45 pm in St Wilfrid's Church, Haywards Heath.

Tickets £12, conc'ns £11, member's discount £3
Family rate: 2 adults half price with under-18 (£3)

For further information, telephone 01444-456227, or visit:
www.haywardsheathmusicsociety.org.uk

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