



Next Editors: Wendy & Iain Simmons: huntonherald@outlook.com
All items for the next edition of the Herald to the Editors by 15th March

Viva Mexico!

Spice up your evening with a Mexican Night at Hunton Village Club on Friday, 7th March, from 7pm! Expect a night full of flavours, fun, and fiesta vibes, all for just £10 for members and £12.50 for non-members.

Your ticket includes: delicious chilli (with a veggie option), rice, guacamole, sour cream & more, refreshing Margaritas and zesty sorbet to finish with live musical entertainment to keep the party going!

This is a ticket-only event and places are limited so grab yours now from Sam or Astrid at astridsam2016@gmail.com or call 07771 857164. Great food, great drinks, great company! Don't miss out on this Fabulous Fiesta!

Curry & Quiz Night Saturday 15th March

Come along to our much-loved curry & quiz where Phil Nichols will be testing your knowledge with a series of questions whilst you enjoy a curry. Teams of 6-8 people. £20 per person with all money raised going to Hunton Primary School PTFA to provide activities and resources for the school children.

Held at Hunton Village Hall, doors open at 6:45pm, food from 7:15pm. Bring your own drinks, although a small selection will be available to buy on the evening. Please reserve your places by contacting: pta@hunton.kent.sch.uk

Hunton Ladies Group

Hunton Ladies Group who meet on the last Wednesday of every month have a new list of events planned. Among them are talks about forensics, a blind tasting evening, a local author telling us about writing and publishing her own book and as for crafts, a floristry evening is planned and this month, on Wednesday 26th, a fabulous découpage craft evening. We even have the chance to visit a small-holding to meet newborn lambs.

All meetings are held at Hunton Village Club, a super village asset for all to enjoy. Come along and join in. You won't have to join the club until your third visit and even when you do it's only £25 for a whole year. The club has membership rules purely to meet the terms of the alcohol licence. That's a real bargain considering all the events held there. So come along meet new ladies and not only learn something new but have some fun doing it.

A Thank You to The Herald!

The Iyenga Yoga group would like to thank the Hunton Herald for the very kind donation of six yoga chairs. As you can see, they greatly enhance our practice and allow us to try more intermediate poses.

Thanks must also go to the Village Club for allowing us to store them.

We meet every Saturday morning in the club led by Erica and with the introduction of the yoga chairs we can push our practice to the next level.



Tracey Elks

Your Local Contacts:		Maidstone Police	690690 or 101
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Village Hall Booking:	www.huntonvillagehall.co.uk
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Huntonwatch: huntonwatch@gmail.com	07907 019996
Pond and Tree Warden: Sam Andrews	huntontreewarden@gmail.com	'Potholes' Hotline (KCC)	03000 418181
Rector: Revd. Lorna Faulkner*	747570	Hunton Ladies: Chris Summersgill	c.a.summersgill@btinternet.com
Hon Associate Rector: Revd. David Jones	741474	Katie Lam MP	katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk
Churchwarden: Iain Simmons	820875	Assistant to MP Katie Lam	020 7219 8175
	ishuntonchurchwarden@btinternet.com	Village Club: Roger Lee: roger.c.lee@btinternet.com	820210
Community Wardens Team	07811 271021	Reporting HGVs	huntontrafficroporting@gmail.com
Hunton Bell Ringers: Lavinia Thompson	07885 763071		*not available on Fridays
Contact details for other village clubs and organisations are available at www.huntonparishcouncil.org.uk			

Parish Council Contacts		Chairman: David Heaton - 820678, dhhuntonpc@gmail.com
Parish Clerk: Sharon Goodwin - 681238, huntonpc@googlegmail.com		Cllr Tony Stanbridge - 820721, tshuntonpc@gmail.com
Cllr Jonny Goddard - 820096, jonny@cheveneyfarm.co.uk		Cllr Mike Summersgill - 820429, mshuntonpc@btinternet.com
Cllr Annette Trought - 820448, annette@trought.com		Cllr Simon Webb - 07878 018997, simon.webb5@btinternet.com
Cllr Iain Simmons - 820875, ishuntonpc@btinternet.com		

Diary Dates	
'Mexican Night' at Hunton Village Club: Fri 7th March;	Curry & Quiz Night: Sat 15th March; Litter Pick: Sat 22nd March;
Mothering Sunday: 30th March;	Churchyard Working Party: Sat 5th April, Plants & Produce: Sat 10th May.
Check out www.huntonparishcouncil.org.uk/events-list for the latest events. If you would like to add an event, email huntonpc@gmail.com	

Dear friends

March has arrived! Lots of special days occur in March.

On 1st March it is Saint David's Day, the Patron Saint of Wales, who died on this day in 589ad. It was declared a National Day of Celebration within Wales in the 18th century. He is the only native-born patron saint of the countries of Britain and Ireland.

Another is Saint Patrick's Day on 17th March. He is not only the Patron Saint of Ireland but also of Nigeria, Montserrat and of engineers! My husband and I happened to be in Ireland last year on St Patrick's Day. Oh my goodness, there were parades everywhere, and, of course, lots of people wearing green because it is said that Leprechauns can't see you if you wear green and therefore can't pinch you!

For Muslims the whole month is Ramadan, meaning 'scorching heat,' a time of fasting from dawn to sunset. It is so called because of the climate in Mecca at the time when, according to Islamic tradition, God first spoke to the Prophet Muhammad when the Qur'an was revealed.

Mothering Sunday is 30th March. In the 1600s poorer families would send their children to work as domestic servants in the homes of affluent people. Once a year they were allowed to return to their 'Mother Church' where they had been baptised and take gifts of flowers for their mothers. Observance declined after the industrial revolution but was revived in 1913 when a "Mothering Sunday Movement" was started by Constance Penswick Smith. She reinvigorated the UK celebration and by the 1950s her legacy had encouraged the celebration across the UK and Commonwealth Nations, leading to the now familiar day of reflection and the celebration of mothers and motherly figures.

Before it was known as Mothering Sunday, this day was called Laetare Sunday, which means 'rejoice,' and there is definitely a cause for rejoicing in March because at 10.01am on 20th it is the Spring Equinox, hurrah! This is when days and nights are of equal length before the days continue to get longer thereafter. Spring has really sprung when daffodils are appearing, for Saint David, Wales, and for us! Those beautiful flowers really lift the spirits, and symbolise hope and renewal.

I saw a photograph the other day of some daffodils flowering amongst the rubble of Gaza. Now that is an image of hope and renewal for the whole world, isn't it? Enjoy the exquisite nature around us that God created and go well in the wonderful month of March.

Blessings, Sue Elliott - Pastoral Assistant

The Batman Cometh? (with apologies to Flanders and Swan)

Just as we were starting to plan for the full replacement of the cedar shingles covering the church steeple and tower roof, we were advised to get specialist advice on how to work around a potential bat population in the church. We were told to contact the Bat Conservation Trust for advice and perhaps the free bat survey which can be provided to churches.

It transpired that because of the extent of the planned work a free survey could not be provided but we were sent a link to a list of firms qualified to assist us. Warned that this bat advice could be expensive, we were still shocked that the cost of this work alone could be as much as £15,000 to £20,000 (although it could be as little as about £5,000, depending on what is found). The risk of this added cost would be in addition to an already stretching budget of £100,000 to £120,000 for the rest of the work!

Two further factors to consider were that:

after a recent decision by the current Government, our ability to reclaim VAT this coming year is less certain than it was and even less likely from April 2026, and the full extent of the planned work might take up to 4 months to complete during peak wedding season. As a result, we have decided to change our approach to instead target a partial repair of the leading edges of the tower only whilst perhaps taking advantage of the scaffolding to repoint the worst parts of the tower walls (subject to affordability) with scaffolding going up in the last week of September.

This should allow us to benefit from a free bat survey and free guidance as to how to complete the project without risking a £20,000 fine and/or delays in the work program. We hope it will also allow the project to be completed later this year, after the wedding season is over but before bats look to start hibernating, thereby having the best chance of recovering the VAT element of the build cost.

It is hoped our bat survey work will start in April and take a month to complete during which time our architect will be planning the work, getting the required approvals and inviting quotes from builders. We trust that our project settles down to a more predictable path without following the precedent set in the Gasman Cometh!

A Blast from the Past!

In a quiet month for Hunton news we decided to look for material that could be repeated from old Heralds. The following article was written 20 years ago by two much missed village characters, Les Leonard of Woolhouse Oast and Roland (Roly) Day of Elphicks Farm and Grafton House. Some of what appears could have been written yesterday...

Speeding traffic has always been a danger: Roland Day, a past resident of Hunton for 50 years until 1995 and now living in West Farleigh, where he was born nearly 90 years ago, says that careless speeding by drivers through the village has been a problem over the years.

This is one of the issues that Roland has taken up in responding to the Herald's call for "budding reporters" and he has put pen to paper with fond memories of Hunton, while always thinking of the welfare of residents.

He writes: "Firstly, Ron Porter's article in the Herald expressing concern about speeding traffic was well written and I trust that many parishioners (if not all) thought the same as I did. I do not like criticising the Parish Council as I was a member for several years and I know what good work they do. However, I would like to know if the council is applying enough pressure on the authorities; from my perspective it appears to be too much talk, all write and no action.

"Secondly, on the article suggesting that a mystery visitor was placing cones in West Street alongside the playing field, I'd rather

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

thought this person was doing a good job. The cones should curtail speeding traffic and lorries from driving too near the hedge which is in danger, if the cones are not there, of being pushed into the ditch and so cause the road to flood. I suggest the mystery person replace them or at least move them away from the King George V playing field, where they look unsightly. If drivers were sensible and stuck to the speed limit then the cones would not be a problem at all.

“Finally, on the growing problem of fly tipping and the increasing amount of rubbish that appears all over Hunton, it is difficult to know what to do, as it is generally dumped at night. Dumpers should experience this resulting mess around their own homes. Magistrates should be more severe when dumpers are caught and, while I know that their powers are limited, I feel it is time they became unlimited! “

Les was Editor for the first 5 years of the Herald and Roly claimed to have been the first person breathalysed by the police in Kent, may have been the elusive cone man and was also heavily involved in village life - who could forget his renditions of comic songs at the harvest lunches? Both were willing volunteers for all sorts of good local causes and are much missed.

Do WeLoveChainhurst too?

As you may recall, since 2020 Fridays have been seeking approval to develop Reed Court Farm on the banks of the SSSI River Beult into an industrial scale chicken farm. What impact might this have on us you might ask?

The application is for two 262m long, 30.4m wide and 20m high sheds (higher if you include the feed silos and vents required to push ammonia fumes out of the roof), fenced in with 2.5m high wire fencing. These sheds will house 64,000 chickens each, with range areas extending from each shed. It is difficult to see how our air and river quality would not be impacted adversely.

Footpaths would be redirected either along the river where it floods in winter and / or between the fences to the other side of the farm. Walks would cease to be the rural delight they are currently and may be inaccessible during any outbreak of avian flu or similar.

HGVs would travel from Marden through Chainhurst on Hunton Road (to deliver feed and remove eggs and waste) to the access point by the old Hoppers Huts. Our roads are not suitable for HGV traffic and, as with Wares Farm (Redwall Lane), we should expect to suffer from increased lost and misdirected illegal HGV traffic.

This application has been fought over for the last 4+ years. Fridays and their consultants have recently submitted more information in support of their planning application triggering yet another round of reviews, reports and objections.

WeLoveChainhurst (WLC) is working through those documents and submitting technical critiques of the new information, but in addition to that they need help from anyone who believes that this development is an unwelcome industrialisation of our community, detrimental to our environment and a danger to road users.

It is possible that this application will be considered by the Borough Councillors on the planning committee in April and WLC want them to be reminded how much opposition there still is to this scheme.

So, now is the time to remind the Maidstone planning team if you still object which you can do online, by email or by post (planning reference 20/505751/EIFUL). The deadline for the planning team receiving your objections is, we believe, 20th March 2025.

More details on how to object, including a template objection, can be found here - <https://www.welovechainhurst.co.uk/object-now>. What you choose to say is of course up to you. Just reasserting any previous objection would work, but you may wish to focus on a particular aspect of the application that matters to you e.g. damage to the SSSI River Beult, risk of adverse effects on wildlife, traffic issues, footpaths being re-routed, what the site will look like in our countryside, flooding ... there's a long list to choose from!

Hunton Primary School

Hello, we would like to say a little about Pyjama Day. It was an amazing day, seeing everybody taking part was a nice experience. It was cute to see lots of people bringing their teddies down to our Star of the Week Assembly. We are thankful to the School Council who made this day possible. An extra thank you to everyone in the whole school who brought money in so they could participate. A contribution of this money will go to a charity which School Council will decide at their next meeting.



Written by Head Boy and Head Girl- Tommy and Gracie



Hello, this is Jacob and Leo. We would like to talk to you about the cross-country competition which took place at Mote Park on a very wet and windy day. It was very difficult as it was wet and muddy. The run was two kilometres and we had to persevere and we didn't give up racing against other Maidstone schools. Hunton did very well and we had four people finish in the top ten! When we finished the first lap we were so tired but we thought of how happy we would be when we crossed the finish line so we kept going for the final lap. Next year we will try even harder for our school!



Jacob (Year 5) and Leo (Year 6).

Bell Ringing Morning

On Saturday February 8th the bells of St Mary's rang out over the fields as the Maidstone and District Bell Ringers Association held a District Practice meeting in Hunton. The District covers an area from Boxley to Staplehurst, Ightham to Lenham and we had 24 ringers of all ages and experience ringing rounds, call changing (when the ringers change the order they ring according to the instructions of the person in charge of that ring) and 'method' ringing to a prearranged pattern such as Bob Doubles, Grandsire, Reverse Canterbury, etc.

David Jones

Hunton Village Club Opening Hours

Wednesdays 8 – 11pm; Fridays 6.30 – 10.30pm; Sundays 8 – 10.30pm

Next Litter Pick – Saturday, 22nd March

Anyone moving through Hunton recently must surely see that the levels of litter are again building up. This is both unsightly and potentially harmful to cyclists and animals - wild and domesticated. Whilst we hope that the fly-tipping in Lughorse Lane will be cleared by MBC staff, we know that we get little practical help from MBC in terms of litter on our roads, verges and in our hedgerows as they consider our roads too dangerous to walk on. At times they have a point!

Many of you will know that there is a group of volunteer litter-pickers, supported by Hunton Parish Council and Clock House Farm (who collect “our” bagged rubbish and dispose of it with their own commercial waste). We meet at least twice a year and, for a while, leave our roads both tidier and safer. We plan to hold our next litter pick on or just before Saturday, 22nd March and all volunteers would be most welcome to join us. It is curiously satisfying and it does leave the village looking tidier for a while. For anyone doing their Duke of Edinburgh award it might be an opportunity to log some volunteering time?

As is usual, we plan to meet in the Village Hall car park at 10am on the day with rubbish sacks, high-vis jackets and litter pickers. If you already have a prior commitment then but would like to help, please do get in touch and we can arrange to provide equipment and collect filled bags in the week before. We suggest that volunteers choose where they are happy to pick up litter but it is very helpful for us in planning which roads to target if we know your plans in advance. In selecting your area to clear please note that you are all responsible for your own safety and should choose accordingly.

If you can help, please let us know or just turn up on the day.

Andrea and James Forster (forsters.hunton@btinternet.com)

Churchyard Working Party and Snowdrop Splitting

A reminder that, on Saturday 5th April, we propose gathering in the churchyard to seek to improve our already fantastic display of snowdrops by dividing out dense clumps and finding areas that could accommodate more. At the same time, we will be looking to tidy the churchyards and get them ready to welcome Spring! We will be meeting from 9.30am and there will be tea, coffee, cakes and conversation to refresh us all after spending time on our knees! Please email: Lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com to let her know if you plan to come along.

Churchyard Mowing

Church Yard mowing is managed by a team of mowers and a sincere thanks go to all those that tackle the grass around the church to make it such an asset for the church and the village. It is a charming setting for weddings and village events.

If there is anyone out there who would like to help: even just one mow in the year, it is not too late to add you to the rota! Please contact Sue Heaton: heatonsue4@gmail.com.

Early Warning – St Mary’s Church Electoral Roll

It may seem very premature to give notice of the preparation of the new Electoral Roll for St Mary’s Church but every six years everyone comes off the Electoral Roll and a new roll is created by people applying.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) will take place this year on Sunday 18th May and the new roll has to be completed at least 15 days before that meeting. In reality this means we have the month of April to compile the new electoral roll and to display it for 14 days before it comes into effect.

Everyone on the present roll must be approached and advised of this fact so our first step is to use the Hunton Herald to inform people. There will be a reminder and more information in the April edition of the Herald.

David Jones PCC Secretary

Mothering Sunday March 30th

Here at St Mary’s there will be a special Mothering Sunday Service on March 30th at 11.00am. The service will be for all the family with the focus on ‘Mothers’.

Benefice Service Rota – March 2025					
Church	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
Coxheath 11.00am	Communion DJ	Morning Worship LF	Communion LF	Family Service JT & LF	Family Service LF
E. Farleigh 9.30am	Morning Worship BP		Communion CD		TBC
W. Farleigh 9.30am		Communion DJ		Morning Prayer SE	TBC
Hunton 9.30am	Communion LF		Family Service DJ		Family Service DJ
Linton 9.30am		Morning Worship LF		Communion CD	Afternoon Tea KC
LF -Lorna Faulkner, DJ – David Jones, BP- Becky Parnham, CD -Clinton Davis, SE – Sue Elliott					
Midweek Services					
Coxheath - Every Thursday; Holy Communion, 10:00 am;			Linton - Holy Communion last Wednesday of each month, 12.00 followed by soup		

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