



Next Editors: Liz Oliver and Graham Dolman: huntonherald@outlook.com
All items for the next edition of the Herald to the Editors by 15th April

Easter Week at St Mary's Hunton

There will be a benefice service at St Mary's Hunton on Thursday 2nd of April at 7pm to mark Maundy Thursday. This is the Christian holy day commemorating the Last Supper, where Jesus shared his final meal with his Apostles and washed their feet. Earlier in the day, at 9.15am, Hunton School will have an end of term Easter service. The benefice Good Friday service will be held at Holy Trinity Church Coxheath.

St Mary's will celebrate Easter Sunday the 5th of April. David Jones will lead the service, and it will begin at 11am. All are very welcome. This is the most significant Christian festival of the year, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, three days after his crucifixion. It marks the end of Holy Week and Lent. As part of the service, the congregation are invited to decorate the large wooden cross with seasonal flowers (all provided). This, much loved, Hunton tradition results in a spectacular display which transforms the empty cross, symbolizing the promise of new and eternal life. There are always a few mini chocolate eggs to enjoy, as we reflect on the Easter story. Coffee will follow the service.

HUNTON BOWLS CLUB

REGISTRATION & COFFEE MORNING

Saturday 12th April 2025, 10:00am

Find us at:

The Clubhouse, King George V Playing Field
(Situated behind the Village Hall, Hunton)

Tombola and Cake Stall
New Members Welcome

Bowling Tuition (Weather Permitting)
Why not come along and give it a try!
(flat soled shoes to be worn)
Please come along and support us!

Strange Sightings in Hunton

Do you walk around the recently planted fenced area of woodland to the north of Bishops Lane?

Several weeks ago, Wendy and I were enjoying a stroll in the late winter sun. In the distance, about 100 metres away, we saw a woman in a light-coloured puffa style jacket walking towards us with a small white dog on a lead. We passed through a gap in a hedge and turned to say good morning, expecting the woman to be even closer. To our surprise, there was no sign of the dog walker. She had been in an open space. There was nowhere to hide or vanish from view. I went to the place that we had last seen the lady, thinking that she might have collapsed and be in trouble. Nothing!

Once back at home, enjoying a mug of coffee, we tried to rationalise what had happened. In the end, our only explanation was that, perhaps, we had seen a ghost! The next day, whilst chatting to a friend who was

out for a walk with her dog, I recounted our experience of the day before. To my amazement, she told me that she had twice seen a woman wearing the same clothes and walking the same dog. Like us, she had looked away briefly to put a lead on her own dog, looked up and the woman had similarly disappeared in broad daylight on an open path. So, if you have seen the same thing at this location, or elsewhere in the village, post a message on the village Facebook page or drop a note to the next editors of the Herald.

Iain Simmons

Your Local Contacts:		Maidstone Police	
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Village Hall Booking:	690690 or 101
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Huntonwatch: huntonwatch@gmail.com	www.huntonvillagehall.co.uk
Pond and Tree Warden: Sam Andrews	huntontreewarden@gmail.com	'Potholes' Hotline (KCC)	01622 820403
Rector: Revd. Lorna Faulkner*	747570	Hunton Ladies: Chris Summersgill	03000 418181
Hon Associate Rector: Revd. David Jones	741474	Katie Lam MP	c.a.summersgill@btinternet.com
Churchwarden: Iain Simmons	820875	Assistant to MP Katie Lam	katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk
	ishuntonchurchwarden@btinternet.com	Village Club: Roger Lee: roger.c.lee@btinternet.com	020 7219 8175
Community Wardens Team	07811 271021	Reporting HGVs	820210
Hunton Bell Ringers: Susan Clements	07864 041234		huntontrafficroporting@gmail.com
Contact details for other village clubs and organisations are available at www.huntonparishcouncil.org.uk			

*not available on Fridays

Parish Council Contacts	
Parish Clerk: Sharon Goodwin - 681238, clerk@huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk	Chairman: David Heaton - 820678, dhuntonpc@gmail.com
Cllr Tony Stanbridge - 820721, tshuntonpc@gmail.com	Cllr Annette Trought - 820448, annette@trought.com
Cllr Mike Summersgill - 820429, msummersgill@huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk	Cllr Iain Simmons - 820875, isimmons@huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk
Cllr Simon Webb - 07878 018997, simon.webb5@btinternet.com	Cllr Stephen Banks - 07850 545481, sbanks@huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Diary Dates	
1 st April - Church working party;	11 th April - Friends Supper & Quiz at Village Hall;
9 th May - Plants, Produce & Refreshments afternoon;	13 th May - Church working party;
13 th June - Church working party;	16 th May - School Fayre;
25 th July - Village Hall 100 year anniversary.	22 nd August - Club Beer Festival
Check out www.huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk/events-list for the latest events. If you would like to add an event, email clerk@huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk	

April is here and Easter comes on the first weekend.

Bunnies, daffodils, chicks and chocolate, what's not to love? A celebration of new life, new hope and the return of the sunshine (we hope!). In the church, we celebrate the ultimate new start – the resurrection of Jesus. A miracle some (understandably) find so hard to believe could ever have truly happened, and it does seem unlikely, impossible!

But then, I look at a tree that has been bare and lifeless all winter, or the layer of muddy leaves that fill my favourite flower bed in the colder months. Suddenly, I watch something extraordinary happen: The brown twigs slowly develop tiny little leaf shoots that unfold into fresh green growth, and the spiky leaves of lupins appear (always more this year than last.) My peony pushes through the mud and stones (always a miracle to me because I always think this will be the year I finally failed it.)

I venture out with my border collie, as the ground is drying up. The woodlands are full of green shoots, with bluebells erupting from the undergrowth. The orchards burst back to life; and blossom appears, and before I know it, the landscape is transformed. I look at the magic that happens in spring; the miracles that unfold and shoot and sprout and grow before our very eyes. Well, then, I am confident in the existence of a creator who could bring life to anything, in the blink of an eye.

Romans 1:20 says this: *'God's eternal power and character cannot be seen. But from the beginning of creation, God has shown what these are like by all he has made.'*

The miracle of new life is all around us in nature. And Christians believe that all we see in nature points to who God is and what God can do. Enjoy the new life that bursts out around us; and, maybe, as you enjoy the wonder of nature, you might allow yourself to wonder about the God who made it; the new life we celebrate in Jesus and what that might mean for you.

Love and blessings, Lorna

Working Together for a Better Environment

We're very fortunate to live in such a safe and beautiful rural area, but in the crime survey I ran last year, hundreds of you shared concerns about issues that chip away at that sense of security – including fly-tipping, speeding and dangerous driving, antisocial behaviour, shoplifting and unauthorised encampments.

One of the most common things I heard was that people rarely see police officers locally, and that reporting crime can sometimes feel pointless if nothing seems to happen afterwards. I completely understand that frustration, but we must continue to speak up when these problems occur. Reporting incidents helps ensure the police know where issues are happening and where their attention is needed. That is why, over the past month, I've been bringing local people and businesses together, with the police, to discuss these concerns directly. It is important that I make sure that officers hear, first-hand, how people in our area are feeling.

I hosted two meetings on crime and policing through my clubs – one focused on rural crime with the police rural taskforce and people from our farming community, and another looking at shoplifting and antisocial behaviour on our high streets, with the Police and Crime Commissioner and local shop owners in attendance. Alongside this, I've been highlighting to Kent's senior police leadership and local beat officers the areas where people have told me they want to see more visible policing, as well as speedy follow-up when crimes are reported.

Particularly across a large rural area like ours, it's naturally difficult for the police to be everywhere at once. But many of the problems people are worried about are already illegal – the challenge is enforcement. So, please do continue to report incidents, even when it feels frustrating.

Katie Lam MP

More to Look Forward to at Hunton Club

Thank you, as always, for supporting the Club. It's wonderful to see so many members coming along and helping keep our community thriving. I'm excited to let you know what's coming up!

Fish & Chips Night, Friday 24th April.

In good old English fashion, and with a nod to St George, Zoe & Simon will be hosting another classic event, which is always a popular evening at the Club. Contact Kerry for further details.

Save the Date for 'Plants, Produce & Refreshments' at the Club Saturday 9th May, 12 noon to 3pm

Bring friends and family along to this much-loved annual community event. Whether you're a keen gardener, a cake lover, or simply fancy a relaxed afternoon at Hunton Village Club, there's something for everyone. Enjoy beautiful house and garden plants, delicious local produce, drinks from the bar (including local ales), tasty toasties and fabulous homemade cakes. Cakes also be available to take home.

New for this year! - We are offering a small number of tables for members who would like to **sell garden-related items. Tables are priced at £20**, with proceeds going to the Club. Spaces will be limited, so please don't hang around. We would love your support – whether that's donating plants or cakes, helping on the day, or simply coming along. To donate, help, enquire about securing a table, or to simply find out more, please contact Lesley. lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com

To join the club, or renew your membership, the renewal fee will now be charged at the standard price of £25. On a final note, thank you for everyone's help and good wishes over the last month or so. Community spirit is why Hunton remains a special place.

Best wishes Kerry Larkin, on behalf of the Hunton Village Club Committee

"Yee-Ha", Hunton becomes 'Huntonville!'

Thank you to our hosts for enthusiastically getting us into the mood with a classic country guitar playlist at Hunton Club, it was all very 'Country and Casual'. The props in the 'Honky Tonk Rustic Barn' really added to the atmosphere. Cowboy boots, Stetsons, fringed jackets and checked shirts set the scene. There was even a cheeky little line dance to learn! Everyone enjoyed the Hot Dogs & Smoky Beans, as well as the cheesecake to follow.

World Book Day

What incredible costumes and clever ideas came in through the gates on World Book Day. Who would have thought that dressing up as 'a word' would produce such a sight? The children all participated in a wonderful 'word parade.' Congratulations to the winners, though it was so hard to choose! Parents are encouraged to read to their children as well as children reading to them. The long-term impact is that early language exposure builds a strong base for later reading comprehension, cognitive skills, and overall academic achievement. So, enjoy books together!

Have you heard of the '1 Million Word Gap'? The key findings of this study, using popular children's books, found that frequently enjoying books really matters because children hear many new words in different contexts. The Oxford English Dictionary suggest that there are over 171,476.00 words in current use by adults. However, they cite over 1 million overall, including technical and slang terms.



- Children who are never read to possibly hear, and even know, **4,600 words** by the age of 5.
- Children who are read to daily are likely to be exposed to **297,000 words** by the age of age 5. The average adult speaker knows 20,000-35,000 words.
- Children who are read to five times during the day are likely to develop a very rich vocabulary indeed. Maybe, one day, they will even know more than a **million words** !

Winter is Over! News From 'The Apiary'

Like many of you, we're delighted to see the first signs of spring appearing. The flowers are bursting into life, and the warmer, sunnier days have been a real treat for both us and our bees. We are beekeepers based in Chainhurst. Honeybees typically forage within a three-mile radius of their hive. That means our bees will visit Hunton and the surrounding countryside, even crossing the River Beult!

Although the bees are quieter over the colder months, it's still a busy time for beekeepers. Among other things, we've been preparing equipment for the season ahead and checking our hives to make sure the colonies have enough stores to see them through until spring. As the weather warms, the colonies will expand and we'll begin adding extra boxes, known as honey supers, where the bees store surplus honey. Over the years we've been asked many questions about bees and honey, so here are a few answers to some of the most common ones.

Why does honey granulate? All the best honey granulates! Granulation is completely natural and happens to all pure honey eventually. It occurs when the glucose in honey separates from the water and forms crystals. The speed of granulation (and the taste) depends on the flowers the bees have been visiting. Granulated honey is perfectly safe to eat and can be returned to liquid form by gently warming the jar.

How long does a bee live? Summer worker bees live for around six weeks during the busy season. Winter bees are different, they can live for several months, their important job is to keep the queen alive and the colony functioning until spring. The queen herself can live for several years, depending on the strength and success of the colony.

What should I do if I see a tired bee? If a bee appears lethargic you can help by offering a small mixture of white sugar and water on a spoon. Avoid giving honey, as this can sometimes spread disease between colonies.

How can I help bees? Planting nectar-rich flowers such as lavender, foxgloves, borage, and wildflowers can make a big difference. Even a small pot, or patch of garden, left a little wild can provide valuable food for pollinators. Bees play a vital role in pollinating many of the fruits, vegetables and flowers we enjoy, and it's wonderful to see them thriving in our local area. As spring continues, listen out for the gentle buzz of bees, hard at work, collecting nectar for the next jar of Hellweathers Honey!

Georgie & Guy Walker from Hellweathers Honey (www.hellweathershoney.com)

No Water Here!

Like many of you, I was deeply concerned by the disruption caused by the water outages across Kent and Sussex at the start of this year. When running water was cut off for days, tens of thousands of people were left struggling, with no warning and limited support. While South-East Water couldn't get its act together, it was left to local people to step up. Volunteer groups worked tirelessly to deliver bottled water and support those in need. Their response showed the very best of our community. Rightly, Ofwat has now launched a formal investigation into South-East Water, and the Chief Executive is due to be recalled to the House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee.

I want to make sure they hear the truth, not just the company's official version. So, I'm asking all of you to tell me any and all problems you've had with the water, and how South-East Water have dealt with them. You should have received a survey in the post by now, so please do fill it out and return it to me. Alternatively, scan the QR code or go to <https://www.papersurvey.io/s/efv9gn> it's very short so should only take a few moments to complete! I will submit all the responses as evidence to both Ofwat and Parliament. Finally, please do share the survey and event information with friends and neighbours. As always, if there's anything I can do to help, please don't hesitate to contact me at Katie.Lam.MP@Parliament.UK.



Hunton Village Club Opening Hours

Wednesdays 8 – 11pm; Fridays 6.30 – 10.30pm (2nd and last Fridays only); Sundays 8 – 10.30pm

St Mary's Church Working Parties

You will be made very welcome if you can give up a little time to help at any of the St Mary's Church Working Parties. We welcome church attenders, as well as non-attenders, as we work together for the upkeep of our beautiful village. Volunteers arrive when they can, and decide which task they would like to tackle, whether inside or outside the church. The team usually stops for a hot drink and 'nibble' at about 11am. Sessions usually finish around 12 noon. Dates are sorted around Church events – Easter, Weddings etc. The next dates are: Wednesdays 1st April, 13th May & 8th July and Saturdays 13th June and 12th August. Please contact Lesley if you think you might be able to help at any session or would like more information.

Lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com

Cruising the Skies

Keep your eyes peeled in the skies above Hunton, you never know what is playing out above your heads! While hanging out the washing in mid-February, I happened to be looking skyward and saw a large white bird. At first, I thought it was a sea gull but if was far too large, the wings were more rounded, and the tail end was long. The tops of the wings were buff coloured, and the bird's wings were making a deliberate slow flapping movement. Wow! It was a White Stork gaining height and heading in a westerly direction over Buston Manor. It was on a migratory route, very likely heading for Wadhurst Park or the Knepp Estate, where storks are now successfully breeding. They are a native species but have only started to breed again in this country since 2020, at the Knepp Estate. Prior to that, the last recorded breeding bird in Britain was in 1416 and seen on a cathedral in Edinburgh. They are about 1.5 to 2m in length and wingspan up to 2m. They can live 20 – 35 years.

Storks like open, wetland and grassland areas and are not found in densely wooded areas. They disappeared in the 15th Century not only due to persecution but because the wetlands were being drained. The one I saw may well have been on a migratory route from its overwintering quarters in Africa or southern Europe.

On looking up, you may well have seen Red Kites in the area. They have been consistently seen around the northern half of the village. One was found injured in a nearby village and treated and then ringed prior to being returned to the site where it was found. So, you never know you might spot this male bird if its low enough for you to see a ring on its leg. Again, these are very large birds with a wingspan of over 2m and larger than a Buzzard by up to half a metre. Distinctly different from the Buzzard, by its forked tail, it hangs in the wind in a position that resembles a kite on a string.

Sue Heaton

A Murder is Announced!

Agatha Christie would have been proud of our efforts in the pursuit of a murderer! An evening of intrigue, laughter, and a little amateur detective work, were very evident at the recent 'Murder Mystery Night' – what a fantastic evening! Picture clues were used to show us that a woman had been found dead at the bottom of her stairs, she was in a pool of blood and not wearing any shoes. Seemingly, there were many possible suspects for murder. Maybe it was the husband? What about the brother-in-law who had been involved in a secret affair? Of course, it could have been the gardener! Where did that blood on the shovel come from? For certain, the curtain twitching neighbour was able to bear witness to a few facts! Many thanks to Andy Cassidy & Jackie Grace for giving the keen teams of sleuths emerging additional lines of enquiry and for hosting such a fun night.

As the evening drew to a close, each team had to suggest the likely murderer, only one table got it right, the 'Barn Hill Team', well done to them! Can you believe it, there was, in fact, no murder. It was death by a tragic accident. It would seem that the woman had fallen down the stairs because she was wearing socks on slippery wooden stairs. Indeed, the clues were all there for us to see if only we had noticed! Let's hope that we will have the opportunity to operate 'the little grey cells' again in the future.

Thank you to everyone who helped behind the scenes to make the evening run so smoothly. Notably, thanks to Roger and Lesley for coordinating a delicious supper. There was a profit of over £500 for the Club. Moreover, thanks to everyone's generosity, £200 was raised for local charity 'Dandelion Time'. Thank you for supporting such a worthy cause. For more information on how the charity supports the community, please check out the website, dandeliontime.org.uk

Benefice Service Rota – April 2026				
Church	5 th	12 th	19 th	26 th
Hunton 9:30 am	Communion DJ service at 11:00		Morning Worship LF. Plus APCM	
Coxheath 11am	Communion LF	Morning Worship LF	Communion LF + BP	All-age worship. All Age Team
East Farleigh 9.30am			Communion BP	
West Farleigh 9:30 am	Communion LF	Communion CD		Morning Worship LF. Plus APCM
Linton 9:30 am	Communion DJ	Morning Worship LF		Communion CD
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 lunch				

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