



Next Editors: Stephen and Kate Banks: [huntonherald@outlook.com](mailto:huntonherald@outlook.com)  
All items for the next edition of the Herald to the Editors by 15<sup>th</sup> May

## Plants, Produce & Refreshments –

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May, 12 noon to 3pm**

Join us at Hunton Village Club for a relaxed, feel-good afternoon for everyone!

Browse a gorgeous mix of houseplants, garden plants, herbs and veg, alongside delicious local produce including jams, chutneys, honey and more.

NEW this year – a couple of extra stalls showcasing arts & crafts from talented local makers.

Feeling peckish? Enjoy toasties, homemade cakes, teas & coffees, plus a well-stocked bar with local ales and drinks. Whether you're popping in for a browse, a bite to eat, or a catch-up with friends, there's something for all ages to enjoy. Donations of plants and produce still very welcome – drop off to volunteers on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May, 4–6pm at the Club, or contact Lesley to arrange. [lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com](mailto:lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com)

Top tip: Bring cash if you can and park at the Village Hall – it's a lovely short stroll to the Club. Come along, support local, and soak up the community spirit – we'd love to see you there!

## Friends of St Mary's quiz

The village came together in wonderful spirit for the Friends of St Mary's quiz night, to raise much-needed funds towards the ongoing church roof repairs. The event once again proved how much energy, humour and friendly rivalry our community can muster. The village hall was filled with lively chatter, clinking glasses, and plenty of good natured debate as teams tackled rounds ranging from local history to general knowledge and a few delightfully tricky surprises.

Congratulations to all who took part and huge thanks to our quiz master extraordinaire, Mark Dickinson, who did an absolutely amazing job. Here's hoping we can talk him into a repeat performance next year! Also, to all the volunteers who helped to make this another Hunton fabulous evening to remember. First look at the figures suggest an incredible profit of £1,333

*Astrid Cunningham*

## Hunton Ladies Get Kre-ative with Kerry at the Club

Hunton Village Club was full of creativity and conversation last month as our Hunton Ladies came together for a relaxed sketching evening, hosted by Kerry. With pencils in hand and plenty of encouragement all around, everyone had a go—whether it was their first sketch in years or just something new to try. From simple outlines to beautifully finished pieces, it was wonderful to see confidence grow as the evening went on. More importantly, it was a chance to pause, chat, and enjoy some time together in a friendly, welcoming space. There was lots of laughter, a few surprised “I didn't know I could do that!” moments, and a real sense of shared enjoyment.

Evenings like this are exactly what Hunton Village Club is all about—bringing people together, trying new things, and creating a real sense of community. We'd love to welcome more ladies along!

The Hunton Ladies group meets at 8pm on the last Wednesday of each month at the Club with a different activity each time. Whether you fancy getting creative, meeting new people, or just enjoying a relaxed evening out, you'll be made very welcome. Anyone who would like to join can email [c.a.summersgill@btinternet.com](mailto:c.a.summersgill@btinternet.com)

Your Local Contacts:		Maidstone Police	
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Village Hall Booking:	690690 or 101
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Huntonwatch: <a href="mailto:huntonwatch@gmail.com">huntonwatch@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.huntonvillagehall.co.uk">www.huntonvillagehall.co.uk</a>
Pond and Tree Warden: Sam Andrews	<a href="mailto:huntontreewarden@gmail.com">huntontreewarden@gmail.com</a>	'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	<a href="mailto:c.a.summersgill@btinternet.com">c.a.summersgill@btinternet.com</a>
Churchwarden: Iain Simmons	820875	Assistant to MP Katie Lam	<a href="mailto:katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk">katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk</a>
	<a href="mailto:Ishuntonchurchwarden@btinternet.com">Ishuntonchurchwarden@btinternet.com</a>	Village Club: Roger Lee: <a href="mailto:roger.c.lee@btinternet.com">roger.c.lee@btinternet.com</a>	820210
Community Wardens Team	07811 271021	Reporting HGVs	<a href="mailto:huntontrafficroporting@gmail.com">huntontrafficroporting@gmail.com</a>
Hunton Bell Ringers: Susan Clements	07864 041234		<b>*not available on Fridays</b>

Contact details for other village clubs and organisations are available at [www.huntonparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.huntonparishcouncil.org.uk)

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

Diary Dates			
9th May - Plants, Produce & Refreshments afternoon;	13 <sup>th</sup> May - Church working party;	16th May - School Fayre;	13th June - Church working party;
25 <sup>th</sup> July - Village Hall 100 year anniversary;	22nd August - Club Beer Festival.		

Check out [www.huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk/events-list](http://www.huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk/events-list) for the latest events. If you would like to add an event, email [clerk@huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@huntonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## Dear readers

We live in turbulent times and in one sense I am concerned about what to say this month. Things are changing fast. The delay between writing this letter and you reading it means that things may have changed far more rapidly than normal. Over the years we have been fortunate to have periods of stability but at other times life has been uncertain. This is the way life is and has always been.

I have very few letters from my father to my mother but the few I have are all around the time of my birth – the darkest days for World War II. In one letter my father writes of the uncertainty of the world that I was being born into and prayed that I would grow up trusting in the faithfulness of God and not in the 'strength of mankind to solve world difficulties'. Two months later my father died of cancer so I was never able to experience the strength of his conviction in a faith based upon Jesus Christ.

Today, as I write, times are once again uncertain. Nothing really changes does it? Today the moon travellers return safely, the weather changes from the two wonderfully summery days to the 'normal' for this time of year. The talks to solve the Middle East war have proved fruitless and new threats have been exchanged. Ukraine and Russia promise a cease-fire over the Orthodox Churches Easter before no doubt fighting recommences. Elsewhere there will be things going on as yet unreported and of course in the next few weeks we will be plunged into promises of a better world with the local elections. (Pot holes filled and bins emptied?)

What therefore do you want me to say in this letter? All will be well, put your faith in the risen Jesus of Easter and all will be well? No, but I will support my father's view that we ought to put our trust in Jesus Christ, not to get us out of trouble but for us to know that he is our constant companion and guide through the uncertainties of life. In these last few days thoughts of my childhood growing up in the days after the war, the songs I learnt at Sunday School have come flooding back. We sang simple choruses, not just words but sentences with meaning. The reoccurring one in recent days went like this. 'Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in to his wonderful face, and the things on earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of his glory and grace.\*'

By the time you read this letter, heaven only knows what will have happened. I look forward to the June letter to learn.

David

*\*Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus" (the first line of its chorus), is a hymn written by Helen Howarth Lemmel. Lemmel was physically blind when she wrote this hymn. It was inspired by a tract entitled Focused, written by the missionary Isabella Lilius Trotter.*

## Hunton Annual Parish Council Meeting – Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> May

Please come along to the meeting to find out what is happening in the Hunton community or raise any issues – all residents are invited. The meeting will take place at 7.30pm in the village hall, with refreshments served from 7pm. We are delighted to welcome Tim Higgs from B4RK (Broadband for Rural Kent), who will be giving a presentation on broadband provision in rural Kent, which could be of interest to those of you who suffer with broadband issues. You can raise any matters in the open session or ask your Parish, Borough and County Councillors any questions you may have. Hunton's many local groups and clubs will also be presenting short reports on their activities over the last year.

## A little bit of Country at the Club

What a fantastic night at Hunton Village Club! The Country Night was a real hit, with a great atmosphere from the moment doors opened. Guests enjoyed big hot dogs, delicious desserts, and a brilliant mix of music that kept the dance floor lively all evening. Cowboy hats were out in force, and the room was full of laughter, energy, and community spirit.

Kerry Nicholls

## Hunton Village Hall's Centenary...and TrackDogs' 20th Anniversary - Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July

As mentioned briefly in the March Herald, the Parish Council and Hall Committee are organising an 'Event' for the afternoon and evening of the last Saturday in July, which will be a celebration of our Hall, built by the villagers in 1926. Save the date! Ideas are still being finalised, but it is hoped to have some sort of mini-fete in the afternoon for families to meet up and play 'traditional' games and maybe have picnics on the field - any ideas would be welcomed. Then there will be festivities continuing and probably a barbeque in the early evening, ending with a rollocking party/concert with TrackDogs, the four piece band from Madrid who played one of their first gigs in Kent in our Hall back here in June 2016 - so that's also a 10th Anniversary for that gig, to complement their 20th Anniversary tour.

Since playing Hunton/Farleigh (three times) in the 2010's, the band have gone on to national success, playing the Albert Hall, Trafalgar Square (on St. Patrick's Day) and several festivals here and overseas to large audiences...filling the 'cathedral of the Weald' in Cranbrook to capacity last year! But they still keep coming back to smaller venues to remember their roots, and to celebrate those early venues. Although based in Madrid, the band comprise two Irishmen on guitars, a bearded American on cajon/banjo and a Yorkshire trumpeter...their range of pop & folk, with salsa-infused rhythms always brings out the (dad) dancers! Check their music out on [www.trackdogsmusic.com](http://www.trackdogsmusic.com).

While the gig will have to be ticketed for general distribution, we are still sorting out how to reserve enough tickets for local interest. In the meantime, please contact Mike Summersgill with any ideas for pre-concert amusement, whether and how to decorate the Hall, or to get on the pre-ticketing list!

## Can you Help at St Mary's Church Working Party - 9am to 12 noon on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May?

At this time of year there is lots to do in the Churchyard and always some jobs to do in Church. The volunteers also care for the shrub bed outside the village hall. Please let me know if you think you might be able to join the team for this session so I can make enough biscuits for our 11ish break. Thanks Lesley. [Lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com](mailto:Lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com)

## **Phew ... That's Over!**

I hope you will have seen the progress which has been made on the tower of St Mary's? What you may not know is that we were able to raise our third-party grant money from £25,300 in my last update to a total of £38,300 towards a £56,000 project (or £47,700 net of a VAT reclaim). We were delighted!

The most damaged wooden shingles have now been replaced, the louvred windows have been substantially rebuilt and bat access has been installed in all four faces. Apart from the unexpected need to completely rebuild the boiler house roof (which started to leak water through the light fitting and which was then found to have joists that were only just supporting the tiles) this first phase went relatively smoothly and was under budget.

Our first shock was when we found that following a change in the last budget, we would not be able to reclaim the VAT we had expected to reclaim! This has proved very costly for us.

With phase 1 over, the scaffolding was then adjusted to allow inspection of the higher reaches of the stone walls and at this point our costs started to run away from us. We started with an estimate of 11 sqm of repointing but this was raised to 56 sqm of essential repointing and a further 28 sqm of repointing that was highly desirable, none of which we had the funds to address.

At this point the Friends of St Mary's swung into action and agreed to provide a loan that would be sufficient to get the whole job done, including the very highest part of the north facing wall (deemed desirable but essential within five years). Given the cost of scaffolding, it was a sensible financial decision to address this now but not a decision we could have made without their support.

Overall, our costs have risen by about £18k for repointing, £4k for the boiler house roof and £10k for the VAT we can no longer recover. If a reminder is required, this underlines the costs of looking after such a lovely heritage Grade 1 listed building. We are lucky to have it ... or are we?!

## **Hunton Run Club**

I'm writing this after the long Easter weekend, sitting in the garden, watching the sunset after a gloriously sunny few days. It certainly feels like winter has loosened its grip and the cold, dark runs are firmly behind us. Whilst we don't mind a bit of mud, it's a welcome change not to be scrubbing down shoes after every outing. Hunton Run Club have been going strong right through the winter months, with our hardy core group braving the elements. Happily, we've also been joined by some very welcome new faces. With the clocks springing forward, the headtorches have finally been retired to the cupboard and we're making the most of these lighter evenings. The trees, hedgerows and flowers are all springing to life and it's hard to beat a gentle evening run, as the rest of village winds down for the day.

If you've been toying with the idea of joining us, now really is a great time. Better weather, longer evenings, and far less mud, all make for a much more enjoyable experience—and we promise it's as much about the chatting, as it is the running! We meet every Tuesday at 18:30 pm outside Hunton Village Club, for a relaxed 5km loop. All abilities are very welcome—come along and give it a try!

*Adam Moore*

## **Advertising in the Herald?**

We are about to start a new advertising year at the Hunton Herald and are seeking commitments from existing advertisers, by no later than 30<sup>th</sup> April. Do you currently advertise your business through the internet? Might you get more traction via a print based medium? There might be room to add you to our business directory.

The Hunton Business Directory is circulated to over 300 homes 4 times a year and is used by many residents looking for local suppliers of services. The costs have been broadly unchanged over the last 17 years and so are very reasonable at between £43pa to £150pa, depending on the size of the advert chosen.

If you or anyone you know would like to advertise with us, please send details to James Forster ([forsters.hunton@btinternet.com](mailto:forsters.hunton@btinternet.com)) as early in May as possible and I will be delighted to provide further information.

Finally, over its 23 years of operation, the Herald has distributed almost £23,000 to village causes with the largest recipients being the School, Church, Village Club and the Village Hall who together account for 85% of funds grants made. We currently have an undistributed surplus of about £6,000 so if you want to suggest a good village cause that would benefit from our support, do please get in touch!

## **SpeedWatch Volunteers Needed**

SpeedWatch has now been running in Hunton for 11 years; there was a hiatus between 2017 and 2023 until Mike Summersgill took over as Co-Ordinator and several new Watchers were trained. There are three locations that can be used for Watches, authorised by Kent Police; these are all on West Street, one by the Church, one at the Club and one opposite the School - the latter one has not been active for some time, due to the prevalence of parked cars during daylight hours. As an aside, there are also active SpeedWatches in Yalding, Boughton Monchelsea and Marden. The main problem is getting enough volunteers to be 'active'; because in Marden, a much bigger area and population (where Mike is also co-coordinator), there are just 5 volunteers and you need to have 3 to do a decent session. But specific activity in Marden has meant two Police mobile camera shifts have happened on Pattenden Lane since Xmas, after the results of our SpeedWatches and involvement by Cllr. Parfitt.

Twelve sessions were held in Hunton in 2024/25 but just 6 in 2025/26 which were mostly in the 40 mph zone by the Church, and 13 speeders were recorded in the past year. By comparison, SpeedWatch across Kent recorded 27,233 speeding motorists last year, and 507 just last week. So we are not 'troubling the scorers' much here in Hunton...or our efforts mean that you are all now driving much more carefully (in case we are out and about) and keeping to the speed limit! My thanks go to those who are driving safely and especially to our four willing volunteers on the Watches for their time and diligence, often in windy and cold conditions! So, as we have just 5 volunteers in Hunton and would like more to help us, please contact Mike Summersgill on [huntontrafficroporting@gmail.com](mailto:huntontrafficroporting@gmail.com) to get the online Training link from Kent Police or ask for any details as to how to get involved.

## Hunton Village Club Opening Hours

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

### Alleluia!

Ten minutes before the beginning of the service, I peeped out from behind the vestry curtain to see only four people in church! The wonderful effort to make the church look so beautiful, and welcoming, seemed a little futile! Then, with great joy, a stream of people arrived ready to mark the Christian celebration of Easter; how wonderful to see familiar faces and many new ones. In total, the congregation numbered 54, including 45 adults and 9 children. David Jones led the communion service ensuring that the children were equally involved with questions and a challenge. He asked, “Can you count how many ‘Alleluias’ in the service?” This word, which means ‘praise the Lord’ actually appeared 37 times!

Together, we thought about the resurrection of Jesus as a new beginning. During the hymns, each member of the congregation placed a flower on the cross; soon the cross was festooned with light and colour-a joy to behold! Thanks to Sarah Jones, Sue Scott, and many others, for decorating the church as well as tidying the church yard, dusting the cobwebs away and even painting the loo door! The ancient, 600-year-old, oak doors even benefitted from a new coat of wax! Following the service, coffee, cakes and many mini chocolate eggs were shared, indeed, it was a joyous end to our time together - Hunton at its best!

*Wendy Simmons*

### Much Needed Friends!

Hunton, like most Kentish villages, has a church which, in the past, was central to its life. Most of us still need the church at some time in our lives – a wedding, a baptism, sadly a funeral, at Christmas or Easter. Even if we do not attend often, would we miss the church if it were not there?

Our building needs regular care maintenance just like your own home ... in fact rather more than most homes, being over 1,000 years old in parts! To help with this the Friends of St. Mary’s was established as a registered charity 18 years ago. Since that time the Friends have been invaluable in helping to keep the church open but recent outgoings have been significant.

In the last few years, the Friends have committed over £40,000 towards essential maintenance including replacing a major beam running the full length of the south aisle, the re-roofing of the boiler house and, most recently, extensive repointing to the upper reaches of the tower as well as much needed repairs to the shingles and louvred windows in the spire.

So where does the money come from? Volunteers carry out fund raising events throughout the year and some kind souls support the Friends with regular standing orders, but resources are now running uncomfortably low. If another large project is required, could we manage to fund it?

If you can provide support by attending a Friends fundraiser or by setting up a standing order, it would help rebuild resources and contribute to a more secure future for our Grade 1 listed church. If you can help, please email [mary.goddard1@icloud.com](mailto:mary.goddard1@icloud.com) or [lisa@thedolmans.co.uk](mailto:lisa@thedolmans.co.uk) and one of them will be delighted to assist!

### Gardening Inspiration

Now at last, we are getting some warmth and brighter days and shoots are coming in the garden. What more could you want to spur your inspiration and optimism of what your garden might become as the seasons progress.

We were lucky enough to get tickets for the talk given by Chris Beardshaw at the Marden Gardening Club in March. Most will know Chris Beardshaw for his participation in the Radio 4’s Gardeners’ Question Time and as a 10-time gold medal winner at the Chelsea Flower Show. He is probably the only gardener in the media who has a design and plant-based qualification and has honorary associations at several universities. His teaching came across as a clear passion of his, and his ability to excite us with his skill and knowledge about aspects of garden design were evident. He talked through a handful of his award-winning designs and getting behind the purpose to capture the essence and meaning of the organisation it was representing.

His message was clear – there are no rules, and it is absolutely what makes you love and enjoy the space you have created that is key, so set to with some new ideas that might change the way you feel about the space you have.

*Sue Heaton*

Benefice Service Rota – May 2026					
Church	3 <sup>rd</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	24 <sup>th</sup>	31 <sup>st</sup>
Coxheath 11:00 am	Communion <i>LF</i>	Morning Worship + APCM <i>LF</i>	Communion <i>LF + BP</i>	All-age worship <i>All-age Team</i>	
East Farleigh 9:30 am	Morning Worship + APCM <i>LF</i>		Communion <i>LF + BP</i>		
West Farleigh 9:30 am		Communion <i>DJ</i>		Morning Worship <i>LF</i>	Benefice Communion 10:30am <i>DJ + BP</i>
Hunton 9:30 am	Communion <i>CD</i>		Family service + Baptism <i>DJ</i>		
Linton 9:30 am		Morning Worship <i>LF</i>		Communion <i>DJ</i>	
LF -Lorna Faulkner, DJ – David Jones, BP- Becky Parnham, CD -Clinton Davis, SE – Sue Elliott					
<b>Midweek Services</b>					
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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