

## **Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council – December 2016**

### **Councillor's Contact Numbers**

|                             |               |                   |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Councillor Alison Bunyan    |               | Tel: 01580 713831 |
| Councillor Brian Clifford   |               | Tel: 01580 713668 |
| Councillor David Cook       |               | Tel: 01580 713310 |
| Councillor Andy Fairweather |               | Tel: 01580 712146 |
| Councillor Trisha Fermor    |               | Tel: 01580 713577 |
| Councillor Peter Goodchild  |               | Tel: 01580 712505 |
| Councillor Linda Hall       |               | Tel: 01580 213468 |
| Councillor Matt Hartley     |               | Tel: 01580 720511 |
| Councillor Graham Holmes    |               | Tel: 01580 712653 |
| Councillor Tim Kemp         |               | Tel: 01580 852558 |
| Councillor Francis Rook     | Vice Chairman | Tel: 01580 713169 |
| Councillor John Smith       |               | Tel: 01580 712898 |
| Councillor Brian Swann      |               | Tel: 01580 712732 |
| Councillor Bridget Veitch   | Chairman      | Tel: 01580 715247 |
| Councillor Nancy Warne      |               | Tel: 01580 720765 |

### **Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:**

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Councillor Linda Hall (Benenden & Cranbrook)        | Tel: 01580 213468 |
| Councillor James Hannam (Frittenden & Sissinghurst) | Tel: 01580 852606 |
| Councillor Sean Holden (Benenden & Cranbrook)       | Tel: 01580 714880 |
| Councillor Tom Dawlings (Benenden & Cranbrook)      | Tel: 01580 241750 |

### **Kent County Council:**

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Councillor Sean Holden | Tel: 01580 714880 |
|------------------------|-------------------|

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

*Chairman Cllr. Bridget Veitch*

The autumn colours been magnificent this year and I am sure you have all enjoyed them as much as I have done. The leaves are now on the ground, and rain can make some areas slippery, so please take care. This is a lovely time of the year. The shops are full of Christmas fare, gifts, and decorations. The school nativity plays are being rehearsed, with costumes being found for the essential supporting cast of sheep, shepherds and angels. The signs are appearing for the Cranbrook Christmas Fair, which is on Friday and Saturday December 9 and 10. Do come and enjoy it.

Coral Kirkaldie has been our Parish Clerk for 14 years, and has been a huge support to all the Parish Chairmen and councillors, not to mention the community, for all of those years. She is leaving the Parish Council at Christmas, and we will miss her knowledge, experience and sound advice. We wish her pleasure and enjoyment in her retirement. Lori Ham, who has been our Deputy Clerk for the last five years, has been promoted to Clerk, and I am sure will be a great success. We were delighted to get such a strong response to our advertisement for a replacement Deputy Clerk, and our new appointee will be joining us in January.

I was delighted to see such a strong attendance at the Remembrance Day Service at St Dunstons, and the additional support from the community for the parade and short service up at the War Memorial. Thank you to everyone who made that such a success.

It will seem to many of you that the Community Centre project has gone quiet. Behind the scenes we are working hard to obtain the legal permissions from the Co-operative Group for the access from the Regal car park into Wilkes Field. You may well wonder why this hasn't been done before. The simple answer was that the Co-operative Group would not agree to anything before we had the planning permission. There is a legal document dated 2006 signed by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the Co-operative Group that requires us to get their permission, even though the access does not cross any of the Co-operative Group's land. The freehold of the land for the Community Centre will not be transferred to the Parish Council until the access permission is achieved.

I would like to thank all of the councillors working so hard for our community, and for the significant amount of interest from you in our Neighbourhood Plan activities. I am sure this will prove to be a valuable process as it necessitates involvement from the whole community.

I wish you very happiness over the Christmas season, and every good wish for 2017.

## REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:

### POLICY & RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT:

*Chairman Cllr. Peter Goodchild*

*Oh, say! does that star-spangled banner yet wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?*

Well, what a turn of events for our friends in the U.S. Have they really been dealt a 'Trump' card? OK, I will not enquire further before the New Year!

Perhaps we have enough matters this side of the pond, before we go waltzing into their new horizons! Not just Post Brexit. Post US elections. Rather post-haste into our own issues focussing on matters where we can all contribute for the good of all in Cranbrook and Sissinghurst. 'Cranbrook Goes Crackers' before the year is done... Please read on...

Some of you will have already heard ***THE News!*** No, No, not the US presidential minutia; neither the latest International trade deals, nor even latest developments with our own Community Centre Fund Raising plans. This is NOW, and affects us all. This is here! This is pre 2017... Our splendid and highly acclaimed illustrious Parish Council Clerk is due to step quietly into retirement as flight '016' touches down for the last time on 31<sup>st</sup> December this year. Coral Kirkaldie, Clerk Extraordinaire is to leave her post after many years of unstinting excellent service at "The Desk!" May I encourage you to pop in to the office, and briefly add your thanks to the many who have SO appreciated Coral's commitment to serving and enhancing our now "Quality status" Parish Council. Echoes of her achievements will ring on for years!

But there is a silver lining sparkling in the wings! Tidings of comfort and joy! We wish to congratulate our newly appointed Clerk, Mrs Lori Ham who takes on her new role at the beginning of next month. There's more... All change for a new year. It is rumoured, It is forecast, even reckoned that we are to be stirred, and impressed by a New-look Parish Magazine. More details soon, suffice to say, a quarterly publication worthy of our communities, brimming with life and colour..!

To all those who take an interest in the financial workings of the Parish Council, I can confirm and assure you, that all is well. Bills are paid, debts are nil, and after rigorous checks, all continues on a trajectory that is healthy, wise, secure and all 'in order'. Our continuing true thanks to Councillor Brian Swann who faithfully executes these matters with dedicated professionalism and humble skill.

We are sorry to witness a few businesses struggling and want to offer support wherever we are able. This New Year holds promise of new things for many. Maybe new opportunities? Maybe new businesses, new neighbours, new ideas and friendships? What will you take on next year to enhance our place? Maybe you will be inspired and encouraged to bring something to 'the table' for others to share!

It has been very good to see local talent presented and displayed in the Arts and in Literature. Good spirits at the Apple Fayre, through Drama Productions and in several group initiatives! Cranbrook Community Spirit is alive and well Sissinghurst Sentiment is growing friends. Hidden helps are being offered but also sometimes a more public show of support is seen. Bravo for the Emergency First Responders!

Businesses may be struggling here and there but we do want to endeavour to support where we can. Not just with local posters or recommendations, but ground space, goodwill and open hearted kindness. Let generosity and thoughtfulness spring up. Chestnuts roasting... Friends be hosting! ...

Hey, it's Christmastime! We do not embrace humbug, hypocrisy or high-mindedness. But, 'tis the season to be merry... and helpful, even heraldic and hearty! This month is your opportunity to do someone a favour. Go ahead! You choose the moment - and give a stranger a lovely surprise! You'll both enjoy and spread a little more Christmas cheer in town. Christmas was born a Christian festival time, so having started with lines from the USA, let me borrow lines from another National Anthem, as they've been struggling with yet another devastating earthquake...

God of Nations at Thy feet, In the bonds of love we meet,  
Hear our voices, we entreat, God defend our free land.  
Men of every creed and race, Gather here before Thy face,  
Asking Thee to bless this place, God defend our free land.

Happy Christmas to you ☺

## **BURIAL GROUNDS AND PROPERTIES:**

*Chairman Cllr. Brian Clifford*

### **VESTRY HALL BOOKINGS AND CEMETERY TREE SURVEYS**

It's very good news that bookings for the Vestry Hall create some income for the Parish Council, especially as the building in the centre of Cranbrook, not only incurs on-going expenditure but is also at the heart of community life.

The monthly farmers market with the cafe is but one of many regular bookings. That said, the Vestry Hall really does provide an excellent venue, for example parties, musical evenings and large audience meetings. If you, family or friends are thinking about a suitable venue, the Parish Council Clerk would be more than happy to show you the facilities available for hire.

For smaller gatherings, the Addison Conference Room in the Information Centre and the Parish Council Chamber might also be the sort of space required, again both venues can be viewed and hired and the Clerk also has a hire rate card for you to see.

Committee Members are in the process of deciding what use the two telephone kiosks might be put to, having taken over ownership from BT, any ideas you may have please direct them to the Clerk.

Recently, it was necessary for our committee to commission a Tree Safety Survey in St. Dunstan's Churchyard. A very thorough report was produced by Christopher Masters from Cirencester based Discover Trees Company, and the report identified the need for beneficial and considerable management.

Our committee having accepted the survey has now sent it to the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Tree Officer seeking permission for the work to be carried out.

Subsequently, a similar survey has now been commissioned at Sissinghurst Cemetery and we await that report.

## **ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

*Chairman Cllr. Graham Holmes*

In the September 2016 issue I outlined plans the Council are pursuing to re issue the leaflets covering the Cranbrook Heritage Trail and Visit Cranbrook & Beyond. I am pleased to report that the Heritage Trail leaflets have now been completed and are now on display in the Weald Information Centre. Should any local organisation require a supply, please call in at the office.

The Beyond leaflets are quite a challenge to update, but the Committee is working hard on this for the new tourist season. My thanks to Cllr. Nancy Warne for her help with this particular project.

The Committee would like to thank all those involved in both the Cranbrook Literature Festival and the Apple Fair. A lot of hard work went into producing these events and we are extremely grateful.

On a somewhat more serious note, many will recall the closure of the HSBC Bank branch in Cranbrook. It has now been announced that their branch in Tenterden is also to close. The banking industry make no secret of the fact that increased on line banking is resulting in less use of branches in our towns and villages and as a result, closures are now taking place across the country. The message seems to be, "use it or lose it". We do not want to see any more closures in Cranbrook, so if it is possible, visit your bank's local branch a little more often.

As we approach the festive season thoughts turn to Christmas presents. Are you looking forward to negotiating the traffic chaos on the A21 or trying to find a parking space in Tunbridge Wells? Well, you can always satisfy some of your shopping needs right here in Cranbrook. There aren't traffic queues and you don't have to pay to park. Give it a try.

Lastly, please keep an eye on elderly or infirm neighbours at this time of the year. Do they need help with shopping and are they keeping warm in cold weather. A little help will be appreciated.

I am sure that all my Committee members would like to join me in wishing all parishioners a very happy Christmas and our businesses, a prosperous New Year.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT:**

*Chairman Cllr. Francis Rook*

Parish Council responsibilities can be statutory or concessionary and in these more austere times the above committee feels that it needs to concentrate on the statutory element of what we do. To this end it is imperative that the children's play areas are kept safe and up to date. Play equipment is very expensive and we are spending £2,664 just to replace the bearings on the swings in the Ball Field and Crane Valley.

Similarly we voted to put a new climbing frame in the Jubilee Field in Sissinghurst at an estimated cost of £8,100 including discount. However we can offset some of this cost by a very generous donation of £5,000 from a Sissinghurst resident although we had to decline a further donation of £5,000 that was specifically earmarked for a fence around the play area but as that total cost would work out at about £50,000 we feel the money is much better spent on equipment. It is hoped that the resident will see their way forward to remove the restrictions for their gift. Unfortunately they have chosen to remain anonymous so no dialogue can take place.

Cllr. Veitch has reported that several parishes have erected a multipurpose hard play area surrounded by a high fence. We are looking into this idea with a view to its position and whether planning permission would need to be obtained. I have seen one in Littlestone and they look very popular for those who can still run around and jump.

The Crane Valley is in good order although we are worried that the daily inspection of the culvert grid in the Tanyard Car Park, carried out by Coral, our clerk, will cease when she no longer takes her journey to work. If this gets blocked by rubbish then flooding can ensue at St David's Bridge so whilst we will endeavour to keep an eye on the water levels if anyone is passing that section of the River Crane and spots a problem, a quick call to the parish office would be much appreciated.

We have taken the decision to remove the cardboard recycling bins in the Regal Carpark as it has been the target of malicious fires and considerable mess. Residents have their green bins for paper and cardboard and on closer inspection it has been noted that some industrial waste from shops and businesses from as far away as Ashford have been using them which is strictly illegal.

A Car Speed Indicator was purchased a while ago in partnership with some other councils but unfortunately it has been damaged and no one is owning up to it. So, we have had to fork out on repairs.

The Sissinghurst speedwatch team are very keen to resume their vigilance in The Street where they have logged hundreds of offenders, unfortunately a considerable proportion being local and on the school run but although several people have expressed an interest in running a speedwatch operation in Cranbrook, no one has formally come forward so if you are interested please come into the Parish Office and we will tell you the procedure and training you need to set up a speedwatch group. It can be a worthwhile exercise backed by the police and Parish Council.

We have elected to install our first electric vehicle charging point in Cranbrook or Sissinghurst, the position is yet to be determined but it will be paid for by the housing developer in Sissinghurst. It is my belief that with the rising price of fuel it will not be many years before we will all be driving electric cars.

With Coral leaving at the end of the year I wish to take this opportunity to thank her for her help and friendship especially during the difficult time when my wife died after a long, protracted illness. I sincerely wish her a long and happy retirement and relief from the stresses of her position as Clerk. Many of you know how much she has put into her work and for those who don't she has been the backbone of the town. A positive Matriarch to all the residents sorting out their problems with housing issues, burials and allotment disputes etc. She has been the most loved and respected public servant I have ever met and we should all feel grateful that this wonderful person has been on our council.

Lastly, may I wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year and rejoice that that silly build out at the Wilsley junction is being removed. Three Cheers for common sense.

### **Winter Strategy 2016 – 17**

It is the individual responsibility of every parishioner to take due care and attention in adverse weather conditions.

The Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council have made no arrangements this winter for snow and ice clearance, salting or gritting of the Regal, Tanyard or Jockey Lane Car Parks.

Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council will not undertake clearance of pavements within the parish. Residents and businesses are encouraged to clear the areas in front of their own property, although this will be entirely at their own risk. There are salt and grit bins throughout the Cranbrook and Sissinghurst parish for use by parishioners. Spreaders are available from the Parish Office at the corner of Stone Street, under the Vestry Hall.

Throughout the winter season all residents and visitors to Cranbrook and Sissinghurst must use the roads, car parks and pavements with due care and attention. It must be clearly understood that all users of the car parks do so at their own risk.

***PLANNING & PRESERVATION MANAGEMENT:  
Chairman Cllr. Alison Bunyan***

Just a very short report this time.

Last time I reported that the borough was no longer writing to neighbours to inform them of applications so I thought you might like to know how to find out about any applications that might have been made. The following is the route to take on the Borough website.

[www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk](http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk) select the planning section, then ‘search planning applications’, then ‘planning applications search’. Click on ‘weekly/monthly lists’ – choose either weekly or monthly, then click on the parish – Cranbrook and Sissinghurst PC and validated this week/month. You will then have a list of applications and can click on any that are of interest to and you can search the ‘documents’ tab for all the details. Good luck.

The Planning Committee would like to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and New Year – planning and preserving the buildings of the parish!

**GOLFORD CHAPEL**

**The Chapel will be open on the following days from 10.00am to 4.00pm:**

*Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day*

*24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> December*

*New Year's Day – 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017*



**For private openings please contact the Clerk, who will be happy to arrange this for you.**

## **MORE PARISH NEWS**

Sissinghurst Primary School is looking for outside speakers to come into the school to share local interests, special or historic events with the children.

Please contact the school office – Tel: 01580 713895 or email:  
office@sissinghurst.kent.sch.uk

### **CRANBROOK VOLUNTARY CAR SERVICE**

#### **AN URGENT APPEAL FOR DRIVERS**

This service is available to transport people who are unable to drive or use public transport to attend appointments to local hospitals, doctors, opticians, dentists or clinics.

If you can spare an hour or two occasionally (you are always free to say no if it is inconvenient) we would love to hear from you. Fuel expenses will be covered.

To find out more please contact:  
Dave Campbell on 01580 714373 or  
Evelyn Fishenden on 01580 713386

### **THE CORNWALLIS TRUST**

**Are you going on to Further Education, Training or an Apprenticeship?**

**Do you live in Sissinghurst or did you attend Sissinghurst Primary School?**

**Are you under 25 years old?**

**If so there may be a grant available**

**For further details please email  
[julietmellor@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:julietmellor@hotmail.co.uk)/telephone 01580 714618**

**Closing date 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

### **DECEMBER**

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup>   | Kitch & Stitch Craft Fair – Vestry Hall 10 am to 3 pm   |
| Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup>   | Weald District WI Carol Service – St. Dunstan’s Church – 2.30 pm  |
| Friday 9 <sup>th</sup>     | Sissinghurst Primary School – Christmas Fayre 3 pm to 5 pm  |
| Friday 9 <sup>th</sup>     | Christmas Goes Crackers 4 pm – 9 pm   |
| Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup>  | Christmas Goes Crackers 10 am to 4 pm   |
| Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup>  | Cranbrook PTA Christmas Fayre 9 am to 1 pm  |
| Monday 12 <sup>th</sup>    | Messy Church – Vestry Hall – 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm  |
| Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> | Cranbrook School Carol Service – 7 pm – St. Dunstan’s Church  |
| Friday 16 <sup>th</sup>    | Cranbrook U3A – Vestry Hall – 2.30 pm   |
| Friday 16 <sup>th</sup>    | St. George’s Institute, Sissinghurst – Early Christmas Drinks and Village Get-together 6.30 pm – 8.30 pm      |
| Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup>  | Cranbrook Choral Society – St. Dunstan’s Church, Cranbrook – 6.30 pm – A Christmas Concert for all the family |
| Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup>  | Cranbrook Farmers’ Market, Vestry Hall 9.30 am to 1 pm  |
| Friday 18 <sup>th</sup>    | Carol Singing Sissinghurst – 6 pm – meet at Trinity Church  |
| Monday 19 <sup>th</sup>    | CranARA, Vestry Hall 2.15 pm  |

### **JANUARY**

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Monday 9 <sup>th</sup>    | Messy Church – Vestry Hall – 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm         |
| Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>   | CranARA – Vestry Hall – 2.15 pm                        |
| Friday 20 <sup>th</sup>   | Cranbrook U3A – Vestry Hall 2.30 pm                    |
| Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> | Cranbrook Farmers’ Market, Vestry Hall 9.30 am to 1 pm |

### **FEBRUARY**

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> | Friends of St. Dunstan’s Quiz Night – Vestry Hall – 7.15 pm |
| Monday 13 <sup>th</sup>   | Messy Church – Vestry Hall – 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm              |
| Friday 17 <sup>th</sup>   | Cranbrook U3A – Vestry Hall 2.30 pm                         |
| Monday 20 <sup>th</sup>   | CranARA – Vestry Hall – 2.15 pm                             |
| Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> | Cranbrook Farmers’ Market – Vestry Hall – 9.30 am – 1 pm    |
| Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> | CODS Quiz Night – Vestry Hall – 7.30 pm                     |

### **MARCH**

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> | Kitsch & Stitch Craft Fair – Vestry Hall 10am to 3pm   |
| Monday 13 <sup>th</sup>   | Messy Church – Vestry Hall – 3.30pm – 5.30pm           |
| Friday 17 <sup>th</sup>   | Cranbrook U3A – Vestry Hall 2.30pm                     |
| Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> | Cranbrook Farmers’ Market – Vestry Hall – 9.30am – 1pm |
| Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> | Scouts Race Night – Vestry Hall – 6.30 pm              |

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL/KENT COUNTY CONSTABULARY**  
**RURAL PARTNERSHIP**

**Emergency Services – Police, Fire & Ambulance Service – 999 (or 112)**

For calls where Life and Property are in danger. When a crime is being committed. When there is a Road Traffic Collision and there is serious injury.

**Crime Stoppers- 0800 555111**

If you have any information about any crime. Calls are free and totally anonymous and you could be eligible for an award.

**Police Community Support Officer – PCSO Lee Jules**

Mobile 07772226048

**KCC Community Warden**

Cranbrook & Sissinghurst – Adam Osborn – Mobile 07813695741

**Neighbourhood Watch Area Co-Ordinator – 01622 604395**

For information on setting up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme please contact David Spitter on the above number or email [david.spitter@kent.pnn.police.uk](mailto:david.spitter@kent.pnn.police.uk)



It was in the August 2010 issue that I first wrote about the events of the night of the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1944 that ended with the crash of a Junkers Ju88 bomber just outside the Town not far from Golford. In researching the incident a number of factors were brought together; the diary of an American serviceman based at Lashenden, some very sketchy combat records of Kampfgeschwader 6 (the operators of the Ju88) and the RAF No.96 Squadron, together with Luftwaffe records relating to Operation Steinbok and also our very own Parish Burial Records.

Very briefly, the Junkers Ju88, belonging to the 6<sup>th</sup> Staffel of KG6 had been part of a formation of bombers that had bombed Central London. This particular aircraft was returning to its base at Le Culot in Belgium, when it was attacked by a De Havilland Mosquito night fighter of No.96 Squadron from West Malling. The bomber fell in flames, crashing at Coursehorn, Cranbrook at around 1.30 in the morning. Of its four man crew, Unteroffizier Helmut Harbauer (pilot) and Uffz. Friedrich Schork (observer) succeeded in baling out of the stricken aircraft and were quickly arrested on landing. The bodies of Uffz. Hugo Muhlbauer (radio operator) and Uffz. Fritz Gotz (gunner) were found in the burnt out wreckage and subsequently buried in Golford Cemetery.

It was in late August of this year that I received an unexpected telephone call from Germany. The caller was none other than Thomas Harbauer, son of the pilot of the Ju88 and he indicated that he would like me to show him the crash site of his father's aircraft. We agreed to meet in Cranbrook on the 7<sup>th</sup> September and I would take him to the crash site at Coursehorn followed by visits to Golford Cemetery and lastly the old police house. He would also be able to tell me what his father had recalled of that April night in 1944 and his experiences in the aftermath of his arrest.

Returning to the original story, it will be recalled that the Junkers Ju88 had been caught in searchlights as it crossed Kent on its return journey to Le Culot. Uffz. Harbauer had undertaken some drastic manoeuvres in order to shake off the searchlights and it appears that he had even contemplated diving the aircraft towards the lights and ordering the crew to machine gun them. This order was never given as the searchlights suddenly went out. The pilot and crew were relieved when this happened, but what they did not realise was that extinguishing the searchlights meant that their aircraft had been seen by a night fighter that would then be moving in to carry out an attack. Within minutes the Mosquito night fighter had opened fire setting the Junkers alight. Harbauer was afterwards certain that during this attack both Muhlbauer and Gotz had been killed. Nevertheless he ordered all the crew to bale out of the doomed aircraft but only he and Schork landed safely although slightly wounded.

As we know, Harbauer and Schork were both taken to the former Cranbrook Police Station, where their wounds were treated by Mrs.Hickmott of the Cranbrook Branch of the Red Cross. Having spent the night in the cells, the two crew members were then taken to a detention centre in Hertfordshire known as the Cockfosters Camp. It is assumed that they travelled by road although it was not unknown for prisoners to be conveyed by train. On arrival they would have been interrogated by specially trained officers, intent on gleaning the slightest detail from the prisoners which would assist in building up a picture of Luftwaffe activities and morale at this time. It was already known that the Luftwaffe had been engaged in bombing London in what was code named Operation Steinbok and known to civilians as the baby blitz. These raids had been ordered in retaliation to the regular night attacks on Berlin by RAF Bomber Command.

Following his interrogation Harbauer was told that he would be sent to work on a farm until further notice. This took him to the Cheshire village of Mobberley and to Wood End Farm, where he was introduced to the farmer, Mr.John Farnham. There is evidence that Helmut Harbauer was quite popular because he was taken back to Wood End Farm long after the war ended by Thomas' brother where he was reunited with two ladies who had fond memories of Helmut, the POW. Wood End Farm no longer exists in name although a farm is situated nearby in Wood End Lane.

During his stay at the farm, it was necessary for Harbauer to continue to receive treatment for his wounds and he recalled being regularly collected by the military and taken by car to a nearby hospital. Interestingly, the drivers were all women, one of whom had a boyfriend who was based at a nearby airfield which Harbauer recalled passing on his way to hospital. Which airfield might it have been? An investigation of the area produced what was once called RAF Ringway. It subsequently became Ringway Airport, Manchester and more recently Manchester International.Eventually, Helmut Harbauer's time at Wood End Farm came to an end and he was shipped off to the United States to spend the remainder of the war in a prisoner of war camp. He was not released until 1947 and repatriated to Germany. When he had last seen his family they were living in Berlin, but on arrival he was deeply shocked to see the extent of destruction within the city. After making enquiries he was able to reunite with his family who were now living in the suburbs. He subsequently married and had two sons, one of whom Thomas, I had the pleasure of meeting.

An interesting aspect emerged when Thomas and I were inspecting the burial plots at Golford that had contained the bodies of his father's two colleagues, Muhlbauer and Schork. I was amazed to hear that Thomas still keeps in touch with the family of Uffz.Schork and consequently he found the visit to Golford a very moving experience. For the record both crew members were reburied at the German Military Cemetery at Cannock Chase in 1962. Helmut Harbauer passed away in 1997.

## **PARISH WARDEN:**

*Ivor Hatcher*

The time leading up to Christmas has always been busy and a number of locations in the town used to be kept in full use. Local Churches, schools and the numerous local organizations would hold 'jumble sales' and 'bazaars' to raise vital funds. Queues of people could be seen waiting patiently outside the Vestry Hall, the Church hall behind the Congregational Church and the Bull room, which was above Cranbrook Engineering.

The name 'Bull' room deriving from the public house, The Bull, which was formerly on the site. The Bull room was once used by the 'Welfare' the predecessor to the children's clinic. The building, which was accessed by a metal stairway, was also once used for ballroom dancing.

Another well used building which was located behind the old council offices (now Horsley Place) was the Civil Defence Hut. A simple wooden building made up of a kitchen, hall and cloakrooms. The building was formerly, as its name suggests, the headquarters of the local Civil Defence Corps. A very basic but functional building used for parties, wedding receptions, discotheques. I can remember attending many parties there. The building also became the home of the youth club when the purpose-built building was requisitioned for the present library.

The old youth club, which as I as previously mentioned is now the library, was very well attended. On a Thursday evening, over one hundred and twenty teenagers were occupied, either dancing, playing table football or just sitting and chatting in the coffee bar. The coffee bar was one of a number of designated areas. The largest area being the hall was used for dancing, band practice and I can also remember using it for various activities when I attended the junior Red Cross. The hall was also the original location for the 'fish and chip' supper and Christmas party given to the older residents for the town, the food being served by the junior members of the town. The building also had a small lounge, girl's makeup room with large mirrors along one wall and a workshop for the boys to tinker with their motorbikes. There were also offices for the youth leaders. It was a very busy place but given over to the library services with much speculation as to why!

Although, apart from the youth club, none of the buildings used for community purposes were purpose built, the community improvised and made do, and although conditions were basic, fun was had by all and the community pulled together to put on the events. Expectations were not high and health and safety never ruled, letting things happen without too much fuss and preparation. The good old days!

### **Cranbrook WI**

Cranbrook WI meet on the first Tuesday of each month at the Sixth Form Centre at Cranbrook School. The meeting starts at 7.30 pm until 9.30 pm and all age groups are welcome.

### **MILK HOUSE BOOK CLUB**

Do you fancy reading and discussing books?

The Book Club meet mid morning in the Milk House Pub on the first Tuesday of every month

If you are interested give Anne a call on 01580 292108

### **OVER 60's TEA PARTY**

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January  
2 p m in Sissinghurst Primary School

Tea and Entertainment by the school pupils

If you have not been before and would like an invitation to this  
Please contact Tanya McKie

Tel: 01580 291028 or email: [tanyamckie@gmail.co](mailto:tanyamckie@gmail.co),

### **CRANBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

#### **SENIOR CITIZENS LUNCH CLUB**

Wednesdays during term time

2 course meal with tea/coffee £4.00

**Book the Monday before**

Phone 07894041662

## **THOUGHTS AND IDEAS FROM THE CLERK:**

As many of you will know I am retiring at the end of this year so thank you to everyone for their support during my years as Clerk and I wish Lori every success on her promotion to take over from me as your new Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

Christmas is hurtling towards us and there are many events taking place in the Parish during this festive season. I have included some of the December Parish Church Services for your information. Please also look on the diary page for other events.

### **St. Dunstan's Church, Cranbrook:**

|                           |            |  |
|---------------------------|------------|--|
| Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> | 6.30 p.m.  | A Christmas Concert for all the family |
| Christmas Eve             | 4.00 p.m.  | Crib Service                           |
| Christmas Eve             | 11.30 p.m. | Midnight Mass                          |
| Christmas Day             | 10.00 a.m. | Christmas Family Service               |

### **Trinity Church, Sissinghurst:**

|               |            |                          |
|---------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Sunday 11th   | 11 a.m.    | All Age Nativity Service |
| Sunday 18th   | 5.00 p.m.  | Carols by Candlelight    |
| Christmas Eve | 4.00 p.m.  | Crib Service             |
|               | 11.00 p.m. | Midnight Communion       |
| Christmas Day | 11.00 a.m. | Christmas Praise for all |

**WE WOULD TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH YOU A  
VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY AND HEALTHY  
NEW YEAR**



**Clerk: Mrs. Coral Kirkaldie**

**Deputy Clerk: Mrs. Lori Ham**

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**Telephone 01580 713112 -Fax 01580 713280**

**Email address: [clerk@cranbrookandsissinghurstpc.co.uk](mailto:clerk@cranbrookandsissinghurstpc.co.uk)**

**[www.cranbrookandsissinghurstpc.co.uk](http://www.cranbrookandsissinghurstpc.co.uk)**