

Cranbrook & Sissinghurst Parish Council – September 2016

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REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

Chairman Cllr. Bridget Veitch

I hope that you all had a lovely summer and were able to enjoy some of the long sunny days. Some of you, I am sure, will have spent time watching the Olympics, and were amazed and delighted by the huge success achieved by Team GB. Their medal haul was magnificent, and represented hours of dedication to training. Did you know that we have our own silver medal winner? Ruaridh McConochre was part of the Rugby Sevens team that won a silver medal. He was a past Cranbrook School student, and also played for Cranbrook RFC. Particular congratulations must go to him, and to all those who encouraged him whilst he was here in Cranbrook.

The Sissinghurst August Bank Holiday Fete was a tremendous success, and was enjoyed by the many people who thronged the stalls. The large number of dogs also enjoyed themselves, judging by the wagging tails. The children enjoyed their various races, in spite of lots of dropped eggs in the egg and spoon races. Thankfully, after a couple of years of unkind weather, the afternoon was beautiful and mostly sunny. Thanks and congratulations go to everyone who contributed to a wonderful afternoon. I want to thank in particular our parish councillors who represent Sissinghurst, all of whom took an active part. Cllr Smith was flipping burgers, Cllr Bunyan managed the coconut shy and Cllrs Clifford and Fairweather did the organisation of the stalls, the races and were the voices on the loud speakers. We were also delighted that the Mayor of Tunbridge Wells attended the Fete, and was generous enough to stay for the whole afternoon, talking to many of you.

The boxes and planters around the town have been well cared for by Cranbrook in Bloom, and we all take pleasure in the floral decorations. Thank you to all the Cranbrook in Bloom activists. They always welcome newcomers to their group. Anyone willing to give of their time should contact Linda Page.

More congratulations – this time to all those students and their exam successes. Well done to both the students and their teachers. More details on these can be found later in this newsletter.

Going forward, we have the Apple Fair in October, the Art Show in November, and the Literature Festival at the end of September (30th September and 1st October).

The website for the Literature Festival is:

<http://www.cranbrookliteraturefestival.com/festival-programme-and-ticket-details.html> Events are being held at various locations throughout the town, and a number of them are free. I hope many of you will be able attend several of these.

On Wednesday 31 August the planning application for the Cranbrook Engineering site and Wilkes Field site (which includes the Community Centre) was granted approval. This is a major step forward.

I would like to express my huge thanks to our MP, Helen Grant, who provided a statement to be read out with very strong support for the application. My grateful thanks also to Mrs Carrie Beech, Principal of the High Weald Academy, and Mrs Veronica Summers (Roni) of Age Concern, Cranbrook & District who also spoke in favour of the application. Their contributions were much appreciated. For your interest, the other speakers in favour of the application were Cllr Sean Holden, Mr David Rivers, and myself. Speaking against were Cllr Linda Hall, Cllr Matthew Hartley, Mr Chris Andrews, Dr Joy Temple and Mrs Emma Wood. It was nice to see some of our local community there in support of us.

POLICY & RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT:

Chairman Cllr. Peter Goodchild

Who would have thought we would all be sitting this side of Brexit. Never in the field of UK referendums have so many reasonable British people voted to break the strong clutches of the ‘Brusseling’ tentacles of the E.U. So, everything changes? Well, not so fast. It takes weeks to plan a family holiday; it takes months to organise a village fete; it takes years to build a community centre... so don’t hold your breath on brexiting! (But it MAY come soon!)

Having welcomed the towns’ interest (both Sissinghurst’s & Cranbrook’s residents) in communicating thoughts and views to our busy clerks, we find they are almost running to keep up with their widening duties. Not only attending several committees to record minutes & help with direction, but the mountains of paperwork and form completing competes with the constant flow of visitors... both visitors to the town and of course regular residents frequenting the offices to enquire, to offer opinions and others seeking help in many aspects of local community living. Yes, it’s a busy place and a hive of activity. Always busy – always welcoming and invariably competent in so many spheres of enquiry!

Because contractors have just presented us with increased costs for litter removal (from street bins etc.) we are always grateful for those of you who assist with keeping litter off the pavements and away from hedges etc. Whenever your rubbish can be taken and fed to your own council bin, that’s a wheelie great idea! But, whatever, keeping our communities litter-free is a triumph that we want to keep on boasting about. Despite the change in frequency of the Borough Council’s rubbish vehicles, we can still make our parish a pleasant place to be.

A present ‘Q’

We are considering the idea of a ‘new look’ parish magazine to supplement our ‘new-look’ website. Plenty of thoughts and ideas already! But without getting caught in a quagmire of deliberations, we are determined to discover the answer in our quest! Not quaint or querulous and neither the fruit of quarrelsome quacks! (No inferences intended!) Plenty of discussions but no quibbles... Without quelling the quixotic, our quest is to move seamlessly onto true quality. One quality product for all to enjoy. We are quite sure that something will quicken to our investigative team, and the questions will be answered! So quiet patience please. And finally, guess the number of ‘q’s in this paragraph!☺

On a more serious note, may I on behalf of the Parish Council offer our sincere and hearty congratulations to our new head-teacher for Cranbrook Primary School. Welcome Mrs Rosie Piper, we are so glad that you have been selected and very happy that having worked here as deputy for some time, this initial chapter will be even more helpful for all involved. God bless you!

You may have noticed the new road layout/markings on the approach road into Cranbrook from Wilsley roundabout? The deeper question is this: Are we seeing less heavy vehicles passing through the town centre? Some think we are. In that case, the adjustments are deemed successful.

Finally as the summer sun helps us enjoy the great outdoors, and as the autumn school terms get underway, our thoughts turn to the latter months of 2016. I can share that we are happy to support (as sponsors) The Autumn Apple Fayre in October and then two months later, the Christmas event: "Cranbrook Goes Crackers". So, take care of yourself as the evenings draw in, and watch out for others too. There's little to beat the satisfaction of helping someone else make their way into happiness.

BURIAL GROUNDS AND PROPERTIES:

Chairman Cllr. Brian Clifford

BURIALS AND PROPERTIES COMMITTEE GOES ON TOUR... !

At this time of the year all of our committee members go 'on tour' in and around Cranbrook and Sissinghurst, so that we can all take a collective view of our management responsibilities maintaining standards expected of us, at the cemeteries in Sissinghurst, St. Dunstan's Church and Cranbrook Cemetery.

Various committee members report back on the properties we own and manage, including the Vestry Hall, our property on the Angley Road and Vestry Hall Cottage. Our responsibilities for bus shelters, notice boards and now former BT telephone boxes are all part of our portfolio.

During our visits, discussions with our contractors at the cemeteries is an important part of our management roles. Together with Ivor Hatcher our Parish Warden who has a one-to-one relationship with contractors on our behalf, we strive to maintain a peaceful and pleasant environment.

Maintaining important buildings including the Council Chamber, Vestry Hall and Vestry Hall Cottage always seems to come with the need for expenditure, however it is important that we don't let the building drift into any decay. Their structural future is secure!

With an eye on our financial responsibilities we continue to make available for hire the Vestry Hall, Council Chamber and conference rooms in the Information Centre in the centre of Cranbrook. Our Parish Council Clerk Coral Kirkaldie and Deputy Clerk Lori Ham have details of hire charges and welcome any enquiries.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

Chairman Cllr. Graham Holmes

Firstly an update on progress with the development group recently created to promote Cranbrook and Sissinghurst. Following further meetings, the group now calls itself The Cranbrook Experience. The Chairman is local businesswoman, Emma Wood and work is focused on helping to promote forthcoming events in the Town. The next major attraction will be The Cranbrook Literature Festival to be held on the 30th September and 1st October. This is an entirely new event and a number of well-known speakers are already secured, notably Giles Brandreth, Julian Cleary and Sarah Raven. More details can be found on www.cranbrookliteraturefestival.com

Following this will be the popular Apple Fair on the 8th October. Early details suggest it will be up to the usual standard. Later in the year a special event for Christmas entitled Cranbrook Goes Crackers is also being planned.

To assist newcomers to the Parish, the Council issues Welcome Packs providing basic information to help people find their feet. The Committee has agreed that the Pack requires updating and work is now in progress to achieve this. Distribution is undertaken via local estate agents and housing association, for which we are very grateful for their co-operation. Also overdue for a revamp are the Heritage Trail and Visit Cranbrook & Beyond leaflets and the Committee have now begun work on this project. One of the difficulties in producing information covering such subjects as, what to buy and where to eat and drink, is the tendency for them to become suddenly out of date so this is going to be quite a task, but the Committee are confident that the end result will be a really useful pair of leaflets.

Committee members are continuing to talk to local businesses in order to fully understand their aspirations, concerns and visions for the Town and around. We see this as an important part of the Council understanding how the business community operates and what sort of help it needs.

I was very concerned to hear that the Bowls Club were in need of new members so thought it helpful to mention their plight in this column. If you are interested in taking up the game or are new to the Parish and want to join the Club, please contact The Club Secretary on 01580-714843. Still on the subject of sport the new rugby and football seasons are now upon us and we would like to wish Cranbrook Rugby Club, Cranbrook Town Football Club and Sissinghurst Junior Football Club every success in their coming campaigns. If you want to go along to watch, the Rugby Club is situated at the Tomlin Ground on Angley Road, whilst the Saturday football team make a welcome return to the Ball Field and the Sunday team can be seen at Benenden Recreation Ground. Sissinghurst Juniors play on the King George Field in the village. There is no doubt that there is much to see and do in Cranbrook and Sissinghurst over the coming months, why not join in !

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT:

Chairman Cllr. Francis Rook

We have now visited all the sites mentioned in the last newsletter and found them in good order.

We have minor problems of dog mess and litter on the Ball field which is unfortunate as football is once again being played on a Saturday on the laid out pitch. The grass clippings were collected off the playing area and moved to one side and the football club have promised to remove them.

The new junction at Wilsley Pound has been finished and I hope it will have the desired effect of diverting the huge European lorries around the town and not through it and we don't get any more crushed cars in Stone Street.

Other than that there is not much to report, the car parks are in good order and the town has looked wonderful during the Summer which has a beneficial effect on the increase of tourism due to the low pound.

We will need more car parking space in the not too distant future so any suggestions would be gratefully received.

Concern has been raised with me that as Planning Permission has been granted for the regeneration of the Cranbrook Engineering Site and the Community Centre that the demolition lorries will be using Stone Street. The plan is to use the entrance and exit through the Regal Car Park (subject to agreement with the Co Op) with managed crossing over Crane Lane to avoid any accidents on the public footpath. Watch this space, it will be exciting.

Eventually the public toilets will be demolished and there will be facilities within the Community Centre to avoid the horrendous vandalism that has occurred recently with the tiles being smashed and the door of the Ladies Loo being ripped off three times now.

PLANNING & PRESERVATION MANAGEMENT:

Chairman Cllr. Alison Bunyan

Changes to the Planning Department of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

You may be aware that the back room of the Planning Department (where applications are received, checked and put onto the website) which was sent to Maidstone two years ago has been returned to Tunbridge Wells. It had been hoped that by sharing with Maidstone and Swale BCs, there would be a financial saving and improved efficiency – but it did not turn out to be the case. So from now on applications should be sent to Tunbridge Wells and the service is already improving.

There are other changes that the Planning Department is intending to make in the coming months. As of 1st October, neighbours will no longer be notified of applications – the only notification will be the paper notices which will be attached to something near the site. Some charges will be increased, the pre-application charge is likely to increase to £250 – better covering the cost of the service. There may be charges for fast tracking certain services – tree applications and prior approvals. They will no longer be undertaking further consultations when plans are amended. They are also expected to start charging for invalid applications – 60% of applications are not accurate in the first instance.

I intend to suggest to the Borough Council that they provide a checking service (perhaps similar to the passport checking service). It is sometimes very difficult to understand what is required to fill in the forms and it is unbelievably easy to make mistakes or omissions.

Just as a matter of interest, it is noted that the Borough is still refusing individual applications for single homes outside the limits to build – but in less sensitive and more sustainable positions than the huge applications which were granted at appeal. Quite why the Gladman and the Hawkhurst appeals do not seem to be relevant is very difficult to understand. The inspectors said that although they agreed with all the reasons that those large applications should be refused – the requirement to build homes trumps everything else!!!

MORE PARISH NEWS

Vacancies on CCAAC

The parish is fortunate to have so many splendid historic buildings and no less than three Conservation Areas. Protection and enhancement of these has been greatly helped by the existence of our Conservation Area Advisory Committee (one of only two in Kent), set up long ago by TWBC, with a membership of concerned local people, including at least two Parish Councillors. Generally, members are nominated representatives of local organisations with an interest in conserving our heritage. There is now a vacancy for at least one new member, representing an organisation currently not represented. If you, or your organisation, might be interested in what is not an extremely time-consuming post, please contact the Parish Council, who will pass names on to CCAAC's Secretary.

UK POWER

On 6th September a new national phone number “105” will be launched by electricity network operators for customers to call should they need to report or get information about a power cut in their area.

Key points to note about this service are:

- Dialling 105 will put customers through to their local electricity network operator – the company that manages the cables, power lines and substations that deliver electricity into homes and businesses in their area.
- 105 is just one of the ways that customers can contact their electricity network operator. They can also contact them by phone or via their website, and most network operators are on social media too.
- 105 is a free service for people in England, Scotland and Wales.
- Customers can call 105 no matter who they choose to buy electricity from.
- Customers can also call 105 if they spot damage to electricity power lines and substations that could put anyone in danger. If there’s a serious immediate risk, they should call the emergency services too.

A consumer awareness campaign will run from September through to next spring and will include PR, media advertising, social media and coordinated messaging through partner channels.

Hopefully you can help us to raise awareness of this important new national 105 service through your channels, once the service is launched. We can provide you with materials **for use from 6th September:**

- Copy for newsletters, websites and magazines
- 105 imagery
- Tips on what to do in a power cut
- Comment from our spokespeople
- Social media assets
- An animated film explaining 105
- We can also work with you to co-create bespoke content specifically for your channels.

We will also want to continue to work with partners to raise awareness of 105 in the longer-term. Vulnerable customers who would like to sign up to our Priority Services Register can still call 0800 169 9970, email psr@ukpowernetworks.co.uk or apply online at www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/priority.

If you have any questions or would like any further information, or if you are able to support awareness raising of 105, please can you let us know when, where and how you can help by contacting/emailing Toni Calder, Marketing Manager (toni.calder@ukpowernetworks.co.uk).



Marie Curie is looking for some lovely individual from Cranbrook to help us build a new Fundraising Group in the local area. Any support you can give Marie Curie will be much appreciated.

This volunteering opportunity is a very flexible role, where everyone can get involved in as much or as little as they like to help organise collections, own events and generally spread the word of Marie Curie.

All money raised will help Marie Curie provide expert care, guidance and support, so people with a terminal illness and their families can get the most from the time they have left. Every £20 raised provides an hour of vital nursing care.

Marie Curie Nurses work day and night, in people's homes, across Kent, providing hands-on care and vital emotional support. Marie Curie also supports people throughout their illness, by providing practical information, and being there when someone wants to talk through our new support line on 0800 090 2309 or you can visit community.mariecurie.org.uk. The charity is also the leader in research into palliative care, to ensure we provide the best care and support for people with terminal illnesses and their families. For more information, please call Georgia on 01883832626 or email Georgia.paton@mariecurie.org.uk.

Church Discovery Day 15th October

St Dunstan's Church will be open for a 'Discovery Day' on Saturday the 15th October. All sorts of treasures will be on display in the church that day from 10.30am to 4pm. Including some very old registers of Baptisms, Marriages and funerals, all the many Vestments will be on show.

There will be opportunities to climb to the top of the newly restored tower and discover the wonderful views from there (bring your camera).

Learn about bell ringing and maybe have a go, could this be a new hobby for you? Everything that is used in the church will be on display - named and explained. Can you identify a table from an altar, a chalice from a ciborium (what is a ciborium)? or a hassock from a cassock?

So much to discover and enjoy. Refreshments will be available throughout the day.



High Weald Academy Celebrates Great Results Again! Year 13 A level and Btec Results

High Weald Academy staff and students are celebrating a great set of sixth form results today. 99% of all sixth form entries gained successful passes in A level and Btec qualifications. The Academy has maintained its strong record in vocational Btec qualifications in particular. Many subjects gained high numbers of Distinction and Distinction* grades, (equivalent to A and A* grades). Of particular note are Business Studies and Hospitality with 100% of students gaining the highest grades. Health and Social Care and Public Services were close to that record with all but one student in each subject gaining Distinction and Distinction*.

The only tears were tears of joy and at this early stage it looks as if all students wanting to follow University courses have succeeded in gaining their places. They are going on to study a diverse range of courses including Harry who had an unconditional place to study Broadcast Journalism at Nottingham Trent, Oscar going onto Accountancy and Finance at Chichester and Gemma following a degree in Sports Therapy. We have so many stars in year 13 but a few really stand out, Jodie Farris gained her eagerly anticipated A grade in Maths, a B grade in English Language along with double Distinction* in Business Studies; she is going to take up an accountancy training place in London. With Distinction* in Business Studies and double Distinction* in Hospitality, along with her English Language A level, Lydia Hobson is taking up a higher level apprenticeship place at Harrods! Claudia Hammond, who has always loved riding, has gained a place at the British Racing School at Newmarket and will study Racehorse Care and Management.

The range of qualifications and the high level of achievement shows the level of hard work, dedication and commitment that our students and staff have shown to achieve such success. These are qualities that our students will take with them into their future studies and careers.

Students commented on being overjoyed at how well they have done and thrilled with the outcome from their hard work. “We are very proud of all of our students and know how hard they worked to achieve this stunning set of results,” said Principal Carrie Beech.

High Weald Academy Celebrates GCSE Success

Year 11 GCSE results

High Weald Academy Year 11 students are celebrating today following a very positive set of GCSE results. Early projections show that students at High Weald Academy make better than average progress from KS2 to KS4. The core subjects did particularly well with 63% and 62% of students gaining A*-C grades in English and Maths respectively and 54% meeting the government floor standard of gaining a good pass in both English and Maths. Science too posted a strong set of results with 74% gaining two good GCSEs in science and of the smaller group of students sitting triple science 94% achieved above a C grade.

High Weald Academy has a strong track record in vocational qualifications and many students achieved the highest Distinction and Distinction* grades (equivalent to A and A*) in their vocational courses including Business Studies, Sport and IT. This gives our students a really good grounding to go onto Sixth Form, College places or apprenticeships. The range of qualifications and the level of achievement shows the amount of hard work, dedication and commitment that our students and staff have shown to achieve such success. These are qualities that our students will take with them into their future studies and careers.

Amongst the highlights of our successes we have some students who have done exceptionally well; Millie James with 6 A grades and 3 B grades, Ellie Dillon-White achieved 5 A grades, 4 Bs and a C and Jack Farley with 3 A grades and 4 B grades. Sahiste Saglam stole the show in Science with A grades in Chemistry, Physics and Biology and Callum Rhodes gained his A* in Maths, along with an array of other A and B grades. These students are all going on to sixth form studies and are sure to have glistening prospects in front of them.

Mrs Beech, Principal said, "Staff and students here are completely dedicated. Here at High Weald Academy we support students in all aspects of their development and achievement. It is about making sure that every one of our young people make good progress and are supported to be the best that they can be. We are so proud of all our students' achievements."

For more information or to speak to a member of The High Weald Academy team contact the academy by email: enq@highwealdacademy.kent.sch.uk or phone 01580 712754

News from Cranbrook School – the results season

Cranbrook School is celebrating, following publication of their students' A-level results. 72.6% of the grades achieved were at A*-B grade (the fourth highest on record). 91.9% of all grades were recorded at A*-C and 10.7% were at A*, making for another hugely successful year for the Cranbrook Sixth Form. Many of last year's Year 13 are off to study at some of the best universities in the world, with ten gaining places to study at Oxbridge. In addition, three of our students gained places at Medical School and two more are off to study Veterinary Science. Viewed as a whole, this year group has achieved extremely well in terms of its higher education offers.

We are also celebrating a fantastic year of results in Year 12 – the first year in the Sixth Form - where 68% of all grades were at A-B, the best we have ever done.

There were also some exceptional individual performances at GCSE. Five students achieved 12 A* or A grades, with one – Roxanne Kidney – achieving 12 straight A* grades. The others include Laura-Jane Baxter, Isabella Lynn, Pip Ross and Isabella Armstrong who are also celebrating excellent achievements in gaining at 6 least A* grades with the rest at A grade.

In a year when the top grades have been increasingly hard to come by at GCSE, the proportion of grades at A*-C has remained consistent at a shade under 98%. Overall 55.5% of the grades achieved by this year's Year 11 were at A or A* grade. We are pleased that over 80% of its students achieved the new English Baccalaureate – a very good indicator of future success in the Sixth Form.

All of these successes point to continued high standards at the school on the academic front, with students, teachers and parents all playing their part over the year to ensuring results remain good or better.

The School is looking forward to celebrating its annual Commemoration Service at St. Dunstan's on Wednesday, 19th October. The whole school will assemble to remember all its founders and benefactors from the last five centuries. This will be the last such event before it enters its Quincentennial year in 2017-18. Exciting times ahead!

John Weeds

New non-emergency number

From **14 November** call **101** to:

- report non-urgent crime
- speak to your local officer
- make an enquiry

101 is available
24 hours a day,
seven days a week.
Each call will never
cost more than 15p,
even from mobiles.



Need immediate help?

If life is in danger or crime is in progress call **999**.

If Deaf or speech impaired text '**Police**' and your message to **60066**.

For more information on **101** visit www.kent.police.uk/101



Protecting and serving
the people of Kent

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL/KENT COUNTY CONSTABULARY
RURAL PARTNERSHIP

Emergency Services – Police, Fire & Ambulance Service – 999 (or 101)

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 Osbourn – Mobile 07813695741

Neighbourhood Watch Area Co-Ordinator – 01622 604395

For information on setting up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme please contact
Jacqui Blake on the above number



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 10 th	Bee Show – Vestry Hall 8.30 am - 4.00 pm
Monday 12 th	Messy Church, Vestry Hall 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm
Friday 16 th	Cranbrook U3A, Vestry Hall 3pm
Saturday 17 th	CODS – Bingo Night – Vestry Hall 7pm
Monday 19 th	CranARA, Vestry Hall 2.15pm
Friday 23 rd	Macmillan Tea & Chat Afternoon 2pm
Saturday 24 th	Cranbrook Farmers’ Market, Vestry Hall 9.30am to 1pm
Friday 30 th	Literature Festival

OCTOBER

Saturday 1 st	Literature Festival
Saturday 8 th	Cranbrook Apple & History Fair
	Cranbrook in Bloom Craft Fair, Vestry Hall 10am – 4pm
Monday 10 th	Messy Church, Vestry Hall 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm
Saturday 15 th	Kitch & Stitch, Vestry Hall 10 am – 3 pm
Saturday 15 th	Discovery Day – St. Dunstan’s Church
Monday 17 th	CranARA, Vestry Hall 2.15pm
Friday 21 st	Cranbrook U3A, Vestry Hall 3pm
Saturday 22 nd	Cranbrook Farmers’ Market, Vestry Hall 9.30am to 1pm
Saturday 29 th	Scouts Jumble Sale, Vestry Hall 10 am – 12 noon

NOVEMBER

Saturday 5 th	Autumn Fair – Vestry Hall 10 am – 1.00 pm
Thursday 10 th	Cranbrook Art Show, Vestry Hall 10am – 8pm
Friday 11 th	Cranbrook Art Show, Vestry Hall 10am – 5pm
Saturday 12 th	Cranbrook Art Show, Vestry Hall 10am – 5pm
Sunday 13 th	Remembrance Service & Parade, St. Dunstan’s Church
Monday 14 th	Messy Church, Vestry Hall 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm
Friday 18 th	Cranbrook U3A, Vestry Hall 3pm
Monday 21 st	CranARA, Vestry Hall 2.15pm
Saturday 26 th	Cranbrook Farmers’ Market, Vestry Hall 9.30am to 1pm

DECEMBER

Saturday 3 rd	Kitch & Stitch, Vestry Hall 10 am – 3 pm
Friday 9 th	Christmas Event – Cranbrook 4 pm – 9 pm
Saturday 10 th	Christmas Event – Cranbrook 9 am – 4 pm
Saturday 10 th	Cranbrook PTA Christmas Fair, Vestry Hall 9 am – 12 noon.
Monday 12 th	Messy Church, Vestry Hall 3.30 pm – 5.30 pm
Friday 16 th	Cranbrook U3A, Vestry Hall 3 pm
Saturday 17 th	Cranbrook Farmers’ Market, Vestry Hall 9.30 am to 1 pm
Monday 19 th	CranARA, Vestry Hall 2.15 pm



OPEN GARDENS 2017

It's always a proud moment when your garden comes into full bloom and you can stand back and enjoy the results of your creativity and hard work. And there's a special reward in being able to share your achievements with admiring visitors.

Hospice in the Weald is inviting you to open your gates for a day to gardening enthusiasts and share the delights of your garden and raise money for a great cause at the same time.

The Hospice's Open Gardens brochure each year features a varied and enticing choice of gardens which this year brought in £25,000 for the charity. But the organisers would love to expand the range even further in 2017.

"It's always exciting to see new gardens which the owners might never have considered putting on show," said Pam Coleman, who runs the hospice's Open Gardens scheme. "We'd love to be able to offer an even greater choice."

There's no limit to the style of garden that visitors might enjoy - small ones to inspire creativity, larger areas to explore, gardens for wildlife enthusiasts and interesting ideas for fruit and vegetable plots.

Pam says: "Gardens can be small, big or quirky as long as they are interesting and reflect the owners' passion for gardening. We would like to invite gardeners to contact us this autumn ready for the next brochure. Owners need not be nervous about taking part – many who have done so often tell us how much pleasure they get from the comments and interest of enthusiastic visitors.

"And there's the reward of knowing they are helping the Hospice's drive to raise £7million a year to keep our vital services free for the patients who need them."

For more details, call Pam Coleman on 01892 820502 or email pam.coleman@hospiceintheweald.org.uk

Up until the winter of 1944, the British public had received little detail about the exploits of the airmen of the United States Army Air Force, apart from the heavily censored newspapers. Little was known of the dangers facing those airmen on an almost daily basis. To help overcome this deficiency the U. S. Government, in collaboration with H. M. Government, published a soft backed book entitled, “Target: Germany”. It was described as the “official story of the 8th Bomber Command’s first year over Europe”. Whilst the stories told were exciting for the reader they were hard hit by the censor and contained a multitude of detail that was either fabricated or cleverly altered.

The object of research has been a story called, Mission 95 and the investigation undertaken to find the true identity of the mission, together with its participants and outcomes. This then is an attempt to retell the story.....

It is 16.58hrs, June 21st 1943, the daily operations conference at the 8th Air Force HQ in High Wycombe is about to end. The Commanding General, Lt. Gen. Ira T. Eaker has just made a decision about the target and declares, “We’ll go to the rubber plant at Huls”. This now sets in motion an intricate machine of destruction. First of all details of the mission are sent to several Air Division HQ’s in the shape of Field Order 65 (translated into Mission 65 – not 95 as described in the book). The Order is then transmitted to the Combat Wings tasked with the attack, one of which is the 91st Bomb Group based at Bassingbourne in Cambridgeshire. Target: Germany calls the 91st, “Group 500”, but of course no such Group existed. There are four squadrons in the 91st, one of which is the 401st who, like all the other squadrons operate the Boeing B17G Flying Fortress. When the Order arrives in the early hours of the 22nd June 1943, Bassingbourne is dark silent and chilly. The only shaft of light comes from the main hangar where ground crews are working all night to replace an engine on a B17. It is 01.06 when the teletype begins to chatter out the mission for that day. One of the first people to be woken is the Wing’s Intelligence Officer who immediately studies the document. He considers it a tough assignment. The route will take crews into the Ruhr, an area nicknamed, Happy Valley, but in reality, far from it since it is one of the most heavily defended area of the Reich. Take off will commence at 07.00hrs, briefing at 04.00hrs and breakfast for the men will be taken at 03.30hrs. By 01.48 the Intelligence Officer receives the commanding officer of the 91st Bomb Group, Lt.Col. William M. Reid. He is simply described in the book as “The Old Man”. Reid had previously always taken the lead with his crews on missions but an edict from above has put a stop to that and he must now follow events from the ground.

At 04.05hrs Reid is facing his crews in the briefing room and he begins to explain the orders for Mission 65. “I don’t need to tell any of you what we did at Keil on the last mission. The bombing was good – some of the best we’ve done. I can’t say the as much for the formation we flew. Our target is the synthetic rubber plant at Huls near Recklinghausen. A small force will attack the General Motors plant at Antwerp approximately half an hour before your Time Over Target.”

Reid goes on to explain that fighter cover will only be provided during the withdrawal,” so that means you go in and bomb unescorted. Are there any questions?” There is silence apart from some sharp intakes of breath.

Sitting in the front row is the pilot of one of the B17's of the 401st, it's called Old Ironsides (in the book it's called Tarbaby). The censor has restricted his details to that of a 25 year old who 2 years earlier had said goodbye to his wife and young son back in the U.S. town of Savannah. His true identity is Lt. Baskin Peek, otherwise known to his crew as Buster. Sitting next to him is his 21 year old co-pilot, Lt. Francis Paroda, not named in the book. He is a tall blond boy whose only ambition is to someday occupy the pilot's seat. Elsewhere in the room is the crew's new Radio Operator, Tech. Sgt. Jim Osbourne, a replacement for their usual radio man who had been injured by shrapnel over Bremen on an earlier mission. For Osbourne, the Huls mission would be his first trip. The Weather Officer is now describing what might be encountered on the outward leg of the flight.” Visibility two miles in haze, traces of strata-cumulus over the English coast with patches of alto-stratus up at 12,000 and towering to 19,000 over the North Sea. Freezing level expected to be 11,000.....” It is 04.50hrs as crews pile aboard trucks and head for the dispersal points. The hint of dawn is showing towards the east. With the planning complete and the briefing over, it is now time for the crews to prepare themselves. Each man has a responsibility and for many, this has become a ritual. At 05.27hrs someone aboard Old Ironsides mutters, “An hour and a half to go”, as the others sit quietly watching the ground crews working around the aircraft. Bassingbourne's Control Tower is now full of operational staff, some of whom are standing on the balcony watching as at 06.30hrs a red flare goes up into the early morning sky. This is followed by a gentle rumble which gathers in sound as the engines of the B17's come to life. One by one they begin creeping from their dispersals to the taxiways to await their turn to take off. Aboard Old Ironsides the young pilot eases back in his seat and announces to the crew,” two minutes and forty seconds to go”. Then at 07.00 the B17 rolls down the runway and is the first aircraft of the squadron to become airborne, quickly followed by the others at regular intervals. Elsewhere, at other airfields the scene is repeated as 130 bombers head for their rendezvous over the North Sea. At Bassingbourne the last Fortress takes off at 07.32hrs as Lt. Col. Reid stares at the sky,” I hope”, he says, “all those boys come back”.

As the armada of aircraft approach the Frisian Islands at 24,000ft, the tentacles of the German radar are beginning to plot the presence of a large incoming raid and word is sent to half a dozen Luftwaffe airfields and fighters are being scrambled to deal with the threat. It is not long before the crew of Old Ironsides begin to see the yellow nosed Messerschmidt 109G's and Focke-Wulf 190A's of Jagdgeschwader 26 coming in for the first attack. The Americans have seen this unit many times before and had nicknamed them the “Abbeville Boys” after their French base. The intercom suddenly comes alive with sightings, “*here they come, high at 9 o'clock...Roger... 190's at 11 o'clock. They're after that group ahead.....190's at 10 o'clock.. Roger.....*”

The Focke Wulf-Wulf's are now firing their 20mm cannons. One singles out Old Ironsides at 600yds, as the gun crews return fire. The enemy pilot skillfully carries out a half roll and comes in again. A burst of fire rakes the Fortress amidships as the 190 dives away. In the distance a fighter is seen going down in flames. The entire explosive action is over in just 14 seconds.

Old Ironsides rear gunner, Staff Sgt. Bill Zeigler is sweating profusely, despite the cold and manages to describe over the intercom what he is now seeing, *"they're coming down again at the same group. Looks like they're bunching up and hitting them from 6 o'clock. There goes a Fort out of formation. They're ganging up on him"*. He breaks off suddenly as the co-pilot cuts in, *"co-pilot to crew, fighters at 2 0'clock level"*. This is followed by more exchanges of fire as another Fortress is seen going down with its right wing trailing flames.

Eventually the fighters disappear and, in the distance, the target at Huls is seen. It is now 09.40hrs as Old Ironsides begins its bombing run. At 09.43hrs the voice of the Bombardier, Lt. Chauncey Hicks is heard on the intercom, *"bombs away. Let's get ourselves out of here"*. This prompts the Navigator, Lt. Greg Williams to enter in his log – Bombed 09.43, 25,000ft. By 10.12hrs the main section of Mission 65 has left Huls far behind and is now over Holland. Lt. Paroda checks the B17 for damage. A large hole exists in the vertical stabilizer in the tail and a line of bullet holes scar the fuselage. No.3 engine is running rough but seems to be alright. Just as he regains his seat friendly fighters appear to escort the bombers home just as enemy fighters bounce the bombers out of the sun. Old Ironsides suffers a hit followed by an explosion. The intercom crackles and then goes dead.....

It is 11.50hrs at Bassingbourne as the first Fortresses are seen in the distance awaiting instructions to land. Lt. Col. Reid is on the Control Tower balcony watching and listening to the voice of Flying Control as crews are talked down. One by one the B17's are counted as they roar in, a voice is heard, *"3 missing. No. One came back early so that makes 2. Maybe they landed someplace else"*. Having landed the crews are taken straight to the Briefing Room to give their reports on the bombing, fighter attacks and aircraft seen to be in trouble. They all look very tired as they wait their turn. One pilot is giving his report about a Fortress in trouble," we pinpointed her at 3 degrees east 51.30 north. She must have been hit in the last attack, just as the Spits met us. Stayed in formation awhile and then dropped out about the time we left the coast on the way back. My navigator says the two outboard engines were out at the time. Didn't see her ditch. The Spits covered her all the way down, so I guess they got Air Sea Rescue on the job by this time. Yeah, Old Ironsides, that's her".

Later at the High Wycombe Headquarters, Lt.Gen. Eaker is looking at photographs of the plant at Huls and is satisfied that the 8th Air Force has dealt it a crippling blow. He also announces the cost: 20 bombers lost, 3 men killed, 19 wounded and 191 missing. As an afterthought he adds," the British Air Sea Rescue has just reported picking up 8 men of a Fortress crew off the coast, Now, on this next attack....."

PARISH WARDEN:

Ivor Hatcher

I think that my biggest responsibility as Parish Warden is that of managing the three burial grounds; Golford, Sissinghurst and Cranbrook Churchyard.

Cranbrook Churchyard is the easiest of the three to manage as there are no longer burials to oversee. The main problem within the Churchyard is 'dog fouling', which we have tried to stop by requesting that dogs are kept on leads. Also litter is a major problem with people congregating around the benches and failing to take their rubbish and 'dog ends' away with them. It seems that many people are unaware or seem to forget that although the Churchyard is old and not in use, it is consecrated ground and the resting place of the past relatives (ancestors) of people dwelling in the town.

The cemeteries are now the new final resting place of the local inhabitants of both Cranbrook and Sissinghurst. The cemeteries are used by all religious denominations but are not consciously segregated. It is often found that people of a particular church or who have been neighbours are buried next to each other and this can be quite comforting for those left behind.

As the cemeteries fill it becomes harder to allow people to choose a burial plot. If it wasn't for the fact that choosing a grave space is governed by the weather and other factors, there would be no problem in plots being chosen. It is often said that good fertile land that could be used for farming practices would never be used as a burial ground, hence the problems we can incur. Both Golford and Sissinghurst cemeteries can become particularly wet despite drainage being installed.

One particular problem that has arisen because of the wet ground is that cremation tablets will sink into the ground over time. To try and combat this problem we have instigated a new practice when installing new tablets. It is simply to place a concrete slab under each stone. In the new areas for cremated remains, two foot square slabs are butted up against each other for the slabs to be seated on with each row being separated with a grass strip. The slab also denotes the area that each person is allowed for floral tributes etc. Anything placed outside of the area is liable to be removed as it hinders maintenance.

In the areas previously used for cremated remains, you may see that some of the existing stones are being placed on slabs by relatives of the deceased. For many reasons, we cannot allow two foot slabs and request that those who choose to place slabs under tablets have the slabs cut the same size or slightly bigger than the tablet. I am always happy to advise anybody wishing to do this.

The rules and regulations relating to the burial grounds have all been thought out carefully so as not to offend anyone or to cause more anxieties to mourners at a very difficult time. When we do incur problems, it is everyone's aim to sort them out as quickly and with the least inconvenience possible.

The Chapel at Golford is visited by many people throughout the year and many take advantage of the 'guest book' to write their thoughts and reflections. The Chapel is a very special place and I feel extremely fortunate to be the person that is responsible for its daily upkeep. The windows as always give great pleasure to many, especially when the sun gifts a kaleidoscope of colours throughout the Chapel.

To me the cemeteries are like history books, with each grave having a story to tell. I love to hear the stories told by relatives visiting the graves of their loved ones. I have a very responsible job but the rewards of my position are many.

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

Every Wednesday through to the last Wednesday in September – 24th



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

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:

After a soggy start to the summer it brightened up in time for the children to have weeks of good weather during the school holidays. Now they are all starting back for the autumn term – much to the relief of some of the parents! I love the optimism and eagerness of the new starters – they look so little to be starting school – all neat as a new pin – until you go to pick them up later!

Things change in life and sometimes you need to embrace change. I am looking forward to the redevelopment of the redundant Cranbrook Engineering Site. I have lived all my life in the parish and have seen many changes – some good – some bad, but things have to evolve. The older people in the parish can remember huge changes in their lifetimes. There were a lot more grocery shops in the town and even a toll house stores at Hartley plus another shop and post office. The Toll House is now long gone and replaced with the Glassenbury road junction. There was a little shop at Golford – also a Toll House – many will remember Jack Grounds, the shopkeeper. Bridgelands in Sissinghurst sold everything, school uniform was available and you could pay weekly. Everdens in Stone Street was a history lesson in itself. It had a smell all of its own. You could put in your order at the butcher and grocer and they would deliver your order. Now you can do the same – online. We are living in an electronic age and it is sometimes difficult to just keep up!

The nights are drawing in and the temperatures are beginning to drop. Time to test the heating to make sure it is working and to clear the garden up before the winter. Please take a moment to look out for older or vulnerable people in the winter months – just an offer to perhaps do a bit of shopping or pick up a prescription is welcome to save them venturing out into the cold.

Clerk: Mrs. Coral Kirkaldie
Deputy Clerk: Mrs. Lori Ham

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