

THE VILLAGER

April 2016



Piddinghoe
East Sussex

EDITORIAL

Since the last issue of the magazine we have all struggled on through ghastly weather and the threat of information overload concerning Brexit. Readers will be relieved to know that *The Villager* will not be entering that particular debate! Instead, we would like to bring your attention to a celebratory moment. This is the 120th issue of *The Villager*, marking 20 years or so of its publication. We don't know how this measures up with other village magazines, but it's a pretty good record.

For the team now responsible for bringing the magazine to you, relief has been the dominant feeling amongst us on receipt of some very encouraging feedback for our first issue. Thank you so much to everyone who has told us how much they enjoyed it. Of very great pleasure to us was receiving warm congratulations from the two editors who produced *The Villager* before us – Ken Cheeseman and Mike Draisey. With their highly-valued approval in hand, we must now get on with it!

This issue contains our 'regulars', as well as articles submitted by other villagers. For anyone also wishing to write something, do please take a close look at the final page. We have added some important information about length, the deadline, and so on.

A new 'regular' appears for the first time. Sheila Redman is going to write profiles of villagers. Sheila will ask villagers if she can come and talk to them about their lives, and then write up the conversation as a Profile. As befits the 120th issue of *The Villager*, she begins with the founding editor – Ken Cheeseman. There are a number of interesting people living in this village (they are not always the ones from whom we hear the most), and we think that their 'stories' might make a good read. Please don't nominate yourself to be the subject of a Profile, but if you know that your next door neighbour has hidden depths (only of the best sort), do have a quiet word with Sheila.

The team: Sheila Redman (Chair), Gill Davies, Angie Ridge, Bill Pierce, Sue Massey, David Aicken.

PIDDINGHOE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Village Hall, Piddinghoe, on Tuesday 15th March 2016 at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors David Aicken, Debbie Mills, Angela Ridge, Nick Woolger, Mr Julian Peterson (Clerk). Lewes District Councillor Paul Franklin, David Wilkinson, members of the public.

Vice Chairman Cllr Nick Woolger was elected to be Chairman for this meeting.

Apologies for Absence: Cllr Dennis Stow (it was noted that Cllr Stow was frequently out of contact on holiday), Gill Davies.

Minutes: The minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2016 AGREED By Council and signed by the Chairman.

Disclosure of interests: None from Councillors.

Public Participation

A question from Sue Massey, not on the agenda, that requires a written response. The clerk is to write to the Sailing Club about Fishing Club members driving along the track to the river causing the footpath to become very muddy and churned.

AGENDA

1. Council accepted the accounts as prepared by Councillor Debbie Mills. The balance being £5,418.41 and the balance of Valerie Mellor's bequest is £45,149.19.
2. Council resolved to stay in the smaller Authorities Appointments Ltd, External Auditors scheme, because it was deemed safer to stay in the scheme in the advent of any future enquiry. There was no substantial difference in costs. The RFO was thanked for her work on this complex subject.
3. The planning application concerning Iford farm was noted

and that the application concerning Dormer House was withdrawn.

4. Council agreed that the RFO Councillor Debbie Mills should have a dedicated computer and that there should be purchased a dedicated accounts programme. The costs are below.

It was agreed that the clerk have a computer and printer dedicated to Piddinghoe Parish Council matters. The Council were advised by SSALC there is funding available on application for the provision of computers for use on Parish business.

It was recommended that these be purchased by the Parish following recommendations by SSALC. These computers will remain the property of Piddinghoe Parish Council and be passed on at the end of term.

The Clerk was asked to investigate if funding is available for these projects. Council agreed that all Councillors are provided with computers IF outside funding is available.

Quotation from RBS Rialtas

Purchase of Rialtas Suite Alpha Financial Management Software:

Software	£295
Initial set up at your premises and training	£225**
**Plus 45p per mile mileage	
Purchase of Software	£520
1st year Annual Support and Maintenance single user licence	£633

Ongoing costs:

Annual Support and Maintenance single user licence	£113 per annum
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All of the above prices are subject to VAT at the standard rate.

5. Councillor Angela Ridge reported that she went to an Air quality meeting in Newhaven and distributed a pamphlet.
6. A report from David Wilkinson, from the Neighbourhood Plan Committee, which Council noted. The main points were;
 - a. Repairs to the lane and car park serving the village hall
 - b. Improved pedestrian access to the village hall (widening the existing footpath)
 - c. Installation of solar panels on village hall roof
 - d. Improved lighting around the village hall
 - e. Improve the footpath along the riverbank from the boathouse to the kissing gate including the renewal/repair of the gate
 - f. Planting and other works to the triangle and the north end of the village.

Council agreed that the committee continue work on the above proposals, prioritising A. Council agreed to pay for a soil analysis to move the road/footpath project move forward.

7. There was discussion around the price that ESCC quoted to fell, debark and remove diseased elm trees, and the issues involved by using volunteer labour to reduce costs. The Council was offered a 50% subsidy even though ESCC policy was now only to offer 25%. The total bill including VAT is £6762. Piddinghoe will pay half of that amount (£3381) over two financial years 2015/16, 2016/2017.

The clerk stated that East Sussex County Council had gone through a tender process to achieve the best price for the best value.

Council instructed the clerk to write to ESCC to go ahead with the removal of Dutch Elm diseased trees and saplings.

Council asked the clerk to request that clippings were to be left for the villagers. Council agreed to pay the sum of £3381 including vat. Council will endeavour to recover the vat tax on that amount.

8. Council agreed to publicise on the website the emergency telephone numbers. It was stated that council would identify the most vulnerable people and properties in the advent of flooding.
9. Council confirmed the amended Village Hall Hiring Agreement that any person or organisation that wanted to use the Hoe for any event would provide a paper copy of their appropriate public liability insurance.
10. Council nominated Cllr Dennis Stow to attend the ESCC partnership of Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board. In his absence a substitute would be found.
11. Councillor Paul Franklin gave a presentation and then a question and answering session on recycling and waste collection in the District, and the problems of roadside litter collections. Cllr Paul Franklin was thanked for his interesting presentation and answers.

Progress Reports

1. There were no progress reports.
2. The dates of the next meetings will be placed on the village website: 3rd May 2016 (Parish Meeting), AGM and Parish Council Meeting 10th May 2016, 12th July 2016, 13th September 2016, 15th November 2016.

first draft copy 17/03/2016

Julian Peterson
PPC Clerk

VILLAGE PLAN

The Localism Act 2011 encourages the devolution of decision-making powers from central government to local level. The Act allows neighbourhood plans to be developed. They can cover issues such as the development of new housing, industry and schools. Locally, Ringmer, Wivelsfield and Kingston have become involved.

Following discussions between the Parish Council and the South Downs National Park Authority, it was accepted that a Neighbourhood Plan would not be appropriate to Piddinghoe, due to the lack of development opportunities in the village. However the SDNPA suggested that the Village identify projects that might enhance the character or facilities of the environment and to apply for funding.

If you don't plan your future, someone else will! So a public meeting was held in the Village Hall on 24th February and the following suggestions were made:

1. Improve the condition of the road and car parking area for the Village Hall
2. Fit solar panels, voltaic panels to the roof of the Village Hall
3. Improve the lighting around the Village Hall
4. Discuss with the Environment Agency ways of improving the path by the river between the boathouse and the kissing gate
5. Survey the areas at both entrances to the village and consider improvements such as planting and signage
6. The setting up of a working party to meet periodically to tidy the village.

The Parish Council will be following up on these ideas. Perhaps a non-statutory plan for the village can be devised. It's an ongoing process. The list is not definitive and myself and members of the Council will be pleased to receive further suggestions.

David Wilkinson (Chair)

SNOWDROPS IN MOURNING

A number of people regularly visit our village both to enjoy the views and in Spring to admire the banks of snowdrops and daffodils. For one such visitor adhering to the entry in her diary for Sunday, 14th February which read “snowdrops in Piddinghoe,” this visit had a very sad ending. Whilst she was here she suffered a fatal stroke and paramedics were unable to save her. Her name was Rita Hemsley and she lived in Ditchling. She was a keen nature lover and belonged to many associated groups. Her family have taken great comfort from the fact that their mother died in (the words of her daughter) “this special village of Piddinghoe” and doing something she loved to do so much.

80 YEARS YOUNG

On Saturday, 20th February, the Village Hall was packed to the gunwale (as seafaring John Paddy would have it). It seemed that everybody arrived in party mood and the ensuing chatter, to a musical accompaniment, created almost enough decibels to raise the hall roof. There was a groaning buffet provided by John’s family and THE CAKE was decorated with 80 and 82 (figures not candles). The latter was in honour of brother Les who had also recently celebrated a birthday. John replied to a toast proposed by his daughter and recalled anecdotes of his sea going days which he obviously loved – rough seas and all.

Many, many happy returns John – and to Les.

A good time was had by all and everybody is looking forward to your next ‘big birthday’.

COMMEMORATING MARTIN REDMAN



Dennis Stow (friend, villager and councillor) spoke on behalf of the PPC and village, in dedicating the Village Hall Notice Board and plaque in commemoration of Martin Redman. The commemoration took place on February 6, followed by a gathering at the Village Hall. The whole village was invited and very many people attended. Below are Dennis's words.

'Martin, as the plaque states, was passionate about Piddinghoe for over 45 years, helping us through life, whatever it threw at us. This is not just a testimonial but is also a tribute to Martin, thanking him through Sheila for all the dedication and hard work he gave selflessly and voluntarily as Parish Clerk for 40 years. He also was a member of the Village Hall Committee and helped in its management and success. He also helped around the village, keeping it tidy.

'As Clerk he gave direction and assisted many Chairpersons and councillors. He was very knowledgeable about and kept abreast of all council matters, the law, the council processes and procedures. He ensured that if there was any item or meeting to attend that affected Piddinghoe he would inform the Parish Council giving direction and advice. Martin was very helpful, giving sound advice, enabling the Chairperson and councillors to do their duty in serving *the villagers*.

'Whenever there was an event, he would produce advertising boards and put them strategically around the village. Martin and Sheila would support where possible all events that took place in the village.

'On behalf of Piddinghoe, Martin, we thank you for all you have done for us.'

MARTIN: 'PASSIONATE ABOUT PIDDINGHOE'

Way back in 1970 on one of our regular visits to my parents in Seaford, I suggested turning left into Piddinghoe instead of as usual, driving past on the bypass. The entrance to the village with an assortment of boats drawn up on the mudflats below Saltings (there was no built up wharf there in those days) looked so attractive and as we turned the corner by The Barn, I spotted three newly built houses for sale opposite the Post Office. Said I "what a lovely village – lets live here and in that house there". Martin being a lawyer, took a more considered view but by the next day he had contacted the agents and arranged a viewing. By the next day we had said yes to the agents and by the day after that we had returned home and put our Taplow house on the market. A few months later we were here and thus began his/our love affair with Piddinghoe.

We moved to Old School in 1983 and acquired the barn a few years later. It is now full of memorabilia of our village life. There is much evidence of Martin's prowess with 'boards' in an enormous range of sizes advertising village 'Fayres', Flower Festivals, Open Gardens and activities associated with those events and others publicising many village 'happenings'. As well as publicity, Martin was heavily involved in the running of the above and many Fayres, and all Flower Festivals and Open Gardens which raised thousands of pounds for village funds would not have taken place without his enormous amount of enthusiasm, support and encouragement. He was also a founding member of the Friends of St. John and for some years an active member of the Village Hall Committee.

Martin was always happy and content and to quote his words "I've been lucky enough to have always had great job satisfaction and thoroughly enjoyed doing all the things I have done in my life." I think he would have considered it a life well lived.

Sheila Redman

GRASS ROOTS

We are now well past Candlemas, the 2nd of February, the day by ancient rite when the hay field is 'stopped ' or 'locked up', the day when all livestock is removed to allow the grass to grow.

I however, will not be turning off the four hairy residents occupying my field as I no longer make hay.

They are Icelandic horses ...not ponies, despite their diminutive size. They belong to Piddinghoe people Liz and Dennis Collins, who also have the stables and land in the village.

Their little horses are special in so many ways.

Firstly, they have two additional gaits as well as the typical walk, trot and canter/gallop. The first is the four beat lateral ambling/running walk called the 'tolt' It is very comfortable and ground covering. They can also perform the 'flying pace' – a racing gait when speeds of up to 30mph can be reached in competition.

Animals are specially bred and trained in Iceland to perfect and maintain these gaits.

In Reykjavik every year a remarkable event called the Ice Tolt is held where horses race on ice. Crazy folks the Icelanders.

The Icelandic horse has a very sweet temperament and is extremely safe to ride. It is fearless, docile and very reliable in traffic and open spaces. They are not easily spooked as they have no natural predators in their native home.

The breed has now been bred pure in Iceland for more than 1000 years. A horse that leaves the country is not allowed to return. The benefit of this isolation is that disease in the breed within Iceland is mostly unknown. It is not permitted to even take saddlery into the country without a strict disinfection process.

Icelandic horses are very hardy and weight carrying. They can easily carry eighteen stone all day. I was once sharing this snippet of information with a not-that-interested friend. He rudely suggested that I might need to get off at lunchtime. Nice.

They are also bred for meat...but I didn't fancy the 'Foal' on the restaurant menu somehow. The Icelanders make fantastic fish soup.

If you would like to meet these lovely creatures, Liz or I would be happy to introduce you. Just come and find us first though please. And bring wellies.

Other Matters

Remember that herons breed early in the Spring. Their pterodactillian shrieks will be heard any time soon as they cruise the pond, river and village locating food for their young. They will clear your fishpond unless you cover it.

I heard two woodpeckers hammering away around the church on the 12th of February. Good news.

Checking my diary I saw my first swallow arrive back in the village last year on the 8th of April.

Angie Ridge

TWO MORE SCREEN GEMS FOR THE VILLAGE HALL

Club fans flocked in February and March to see *45 Years*, an absorbing tale about a soured marriage, and then Alan Bennett's remarkable *The Lady in the Van* with marvellous (Dame) Maggie Smith.

Next up is the emotional, Oscar-winning tale of Irish immigrants arriving in America *Brooklyn* (Cert PG 2015), to be shown at the Village Hall on Friday April 22. Then on Friday May 20 comes the intriguing and controversial *The Danish Girl* (Cert 18, 2015) featuring an outstanding performance from Eddie Redmayne.

Seats will be £3 in all parts, including refreshments. Wine will be available for a donation. Following our invitation to film-goers to reserve seats for *The Lady in the Van*, we may do the same for these next two events as the response was so good. You can make your choice of front, middle or back locations and will be accommodated on a first-come-first-served basis. Just let me know in advance. If you prefer just to turn up on the night, that is fine. Watch out for posters and emails.

There was a house of 26 for *45 Years*, with the cast headed by screen veterans Sir Tom Courtenay and Charlotte Rampling, in a typically-English story, which probably explains why neither of them won the Hollywood Oscars.

It seemed to go down very well here and, of course, so did *The Lady in the Van* which attracted an audience of 32. A fair amount of plonk was consumed, nudging the proceeds for Piddinghoe Village Hall funds to well over £120.

Thanks are due to Jennifer as well as David (from Rottingdean) for the kitchen and bar work, Terry for the Box Office collection and Danny for his continued technical advice.

Bill Pierce E: piercewilliam991@gmail.com T: 01273 513162

BELL RINGING BEFORE 'THE CLANGERS'

I wish to congratulate the new Villager Team on the first issue for lay out and contents. I was interested to read about 'The Clangers' and want to tell readers about bell ringing in the past.

When Bert and I came to the Village about 30 years ago, there was a group of Villagers from Brookside that rang the bells. Some of them worked on the ferry boat. Then it changed hands and they lost their jobs. New employment took them further away. Those who were left asked Bert if he would join them. When others had to drop out, I joined in with Mike Draisey. We carried on for quite a while, but Mike was a Doctor then and often had call-outs. This was the start of us doing it on our own. Bert rang 2 - the middle and the small bells. I pulled the big one. It worked out fine, but as the services were every week, we asked for some help to cover us while we went away. A few turned up, but they found it harder than they thought.

It's not just a matter of pulling the dolly – the rope. One has to produce some resemblance to a tune, which is the hard part. The only one that stuck it out was Joan Wells,

Things went well again until Bert had a stroke. That put pay to that for a time. He managed to get some strength back for a while and we progressed, with him sitting on a chair, pulling the small bell with one hand. And so we carried on until Joan became ill and Bert was more disabled. Then for quite a while the bells did not get rung. I missed them very much and am pleased a new group has started. New blood in the village to keep it alive. I like to hear the bells on Practice day, as there is only one service a month now.

Cathy Ward

ALLOTMENT CORNER

April/May

By April, spring should be well and truly underway and the soil should be warming up nicely, but keep an eye on the weather forecasts. Be ready with horticultural fleece and other insulation materials in case of a cold snap. If your soil is still wet from the copious winter rain, work from a plank of wood, to avoid treading on the beds and compacting the soil. Hoe weed seedlings now and protect your young plants from slugs.

In the vegetable garden or allotment

Chit and plant out second early potatoes in the first half of April, maincrop potatoes in the second half. Plant shallots, onion sets and garlic. Transplant broad beans grown in pots.

Outdoors

Sow seed for beetroot, carrots, Swiss chard, cauliflower, kohlrabi, lettuce, leeks, radish, turnip, spring and pickling onions, peas and perpetual spinach in well-prepared soil.

After all risk of frost has passed, plant out tomatoes, courgettes and pumpkins that were previously sown under cover. Other young plants can be planted out once they've been hardened off (acclimatised to the colder outdoor conditions) for 10 to 14 days.

In May, sow French beans, runner beans, squash, cucumbers and pumpkin seeds directly into prepared beds outside. Be alert to late frosts and cover with horticultural fleece for protection.

In the greenhouse

Marrows, courgettes, pumpkins and squash can be started off indoors, as well as sweet peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, aubergines, celery, celeriac, salads and globe artichokes.

If you didn't get round to sowing seed in good time earlier this season, try growing on plug plants in your greenhouse.

Seedlings will need daily attention and regular watering. Open doors and vents on greenhouses to increase ventilation on warm, sunny days and look out for red spider mite.

Fruit

If you have fruit trees in pots, treat with a balanced liquid feed every fortnight.

Where possible, protect plum and pear flowers from frost but allow insects access for pollination.

Remove blossom from new strawberry plants in their first year to help establishment.

If you're interested in renting an allotment this year (or sharing one), please phone Sue Massey on 07950 935 526.

The Garden Show at Firle Place, April 22-24

The Garden Show is now in its ninth year. Opening times on April 22-24 are 10am to 5 pm.

Admission prices are: £7 for adults; £5 for seniors; and £3 for children. Those under four years of age go free. You can also get a family ticket for 2 adults and 2 children for £18.

There will be displays from specialist growers, suppliers of gifts for the garden, plus arts and crafts, garden furniture, and food stalls, and some entertainment to keep children occupied. If you want to look around Firle House, while the Garden Show is on, tickets will be reduced from the usual £8.50 to £4. There is ample parking in the grounds.

Be warned that dogs are not allowed within the show ground but you can walk them around the grounds if they are on a lead.

EAST SUSSEX BETTER TOGETHER (ESBT)

<https://news.eastsussex.gov.uk/east-sussex-better-together>

What's that all about then? What follows you might think is boring, but what is happening might affect how we receive medical and social care.

The government is integrating health and social care services to improve them, and provide financial sustainability. A debate has been going on for years. It seems to make sense. It will reduce anomalies – is this a social care or a health issue? For health, it's free; for social services, it often isn't.

East Sussex has four health and social services organisations, commissioning services for local people at a cost of £935 million a year. Even if the budget stays the same, demand and costs will rise. The shared vision is of a fully integrated health and social care economy by 2018.

For health, East Sussex was divided up (geographically) into three Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). Ours is High Weald, Lewes and the Havens (HWLH). It has the largest area but the smallest population. It is largely rural. When the first public meetings began, about five or six years ago, 'our side of the county' spent many hours at the Hastings and Eastbourne hospitals discussing services. Maternity services caused the most vitriol. Our patients would be more likely to use the Brighton maternity services, but for other parts of the HWLH, they would have to use those for Pembury, Crowborough or Tunbridge Wells – all outside East Sussex. We have no acute hospital but a number of district hospitals which we are anxious to keep. Our objective was for services to be closer to home. In the event HWLH decided to withdraw from this debate and to work more closely with our local hospitals. It was a bit of an upset and, as yet, it is only in the early planning stages. Us 'stakeholders' can see the value of working with the hospitals outside the county, but an integrated service means working with East Sussex Adult Social Care. How will this be achieved?

HWLH works well in the community. We have a close relationship with the CCG and are valued for the information we can offer. There are a number of public meetings, for us usually held in Lewes. A Dementia Project is well under way after a successful pilot in Buxted. Newhaven and Peacehaven have been identified as having health inequalities. People there live ten years less than those in other parts of the county. There will be more money and a range of programmes to reduce these inequalities. The CCG now pays for transport (CTLA) to get patients to doctors' surgeries and to the Victoria Hospital, showing how they have listened and responded to what we have told them.

Finally, please look on the Village Hall noticeboard at the poster from East Sussex Health Watch. It encourages you to give feedback about your experiences of health care. Feedback is vital to help bring improvements.

Kate Davies, Glebe Cottage

RECOMMENDING TRADESMEN

Neighbours have asked if they can pass on to us the names of individuals or companies who have done good work for them, so that they can appear in *The Villager*. We can certainly support sharing of information of this sort but difficulties might arise. One person's good experience may be another's bad one, and we might end up having to publish retractions! Can we suggest, therefore, that if someone does good work for you, you ask for a couple of his or her business cards, and pin one on the main Village Hall notice board, and another on the board at the bus shelter. By the way, we are sticking to *The Villager's* long-term policy of not accepting paid advertising, should anyone ask about this.

ART JOTTINGS

One blustery day in February, my sister and I went to Eastbourne to see the 'Recording Britain' exhibition at the Towner Gallery. Be warned: signage to the gallery is terrible. It is next to the Congress Theatre and the Eastbourne Tennis Courts. I advise following the signs to Devonshire Park. Once there, you will find plenty of pay-and-display parking.

Back to the main menu! The exhibition is free as were all the others exhibitions on show at that time. 'Recording Britain' was set up by the art historian Sir Kenneth Clark at the start of the Second World War. Professional and amateur artists were commissioned to make sympathetic records of vulnerable buildings and landscapes which were thought to be under threat not only from bombs but from the effects of 'progress' and development after the war. By the end of the scheme in 1943, there were more than 1,500 watercolours and drawings representing every English county plus parts of Wales. Artists included John Piper, Charles Knight, Ruskin Spear, Barbara Jones and David Nash. Watercolours are not a great favourite of mine but this exhibition really drew me to this most difficult of media.

Do take a close look at Phyllis Diamond's 'Kennerton Street', a study of two shabby but charming shops with sandbags and boarded-up windows to protect them from bomb damage. Others that deserve a peek include Enid Marx's 'St John's Tavern' (I used to know her from my days working at Kenwood House, for English Heritage, in London and she was a pretty scary woman), Ruskin Spear's 'The Temperance Hall' and George Hooper's wonderful painting, 'Regency House in Tunbridge Wells', very much in the style of John Piper.

Do include a painting by Rowland Suddaby, 'St Osyth's Church'. He was a great friend of Ben's late mother and she passed on a few of his paintings to us.

Of course, it would not be the Towner Gallery without a few works by Eric Ravilious, and this does not disappoint as there is a small room showing some real gems including paintings of Mount Caburn, Littlington and two wonderful studies of 'Furlongs', the house near Firle where the wonderful artist Peggy Angus lived. The gallery has a great little café with beautiful views over Eastbourne and the tennis courts.

'Recording Britain' is on show until May 2. The Towner also has facilities for children where they can make things and paint and these activities are normally free. Just go to their website townereastbourne.org.uk for more details.

Gill Autie

VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE NEWS

We are sad to learn that Carolyn Stow has decided to step down from the Village Hall Committee. We thank her for all her hard work over the years.

ROYAL OAK SURVIVORS DIARY DATES

28th May – Go Nuts in May!
Race Night and Fish & Chips
Lunchtime ploughman's

16th July – Jolly Japes in the Summer
Stoolball and Rounders on the Hoe
Lunchtime ploughman's

3rd September – Autumn Fruitfulness
Lunchtime ploughman's and evening bar

12th November – Charity Quiz Night
Details to follow

KEN CHEESEMAN

As many of you know, Ken was the editor of the Villager when it was first published. He was also responsible for the Millenium Beacon on the bank beneath Church Cottages.

Kenneth Cornelius Cheeseman was born in 1930 in Essex the youngest of a family of 8 and was orphaned by the age of 16. By the age of 9, he had decided he wanted to be an architect. However, Methodism continually tugged at his heart strings and he became a lay preacher by the age of 15 and developed ideas of going into the Methodist Ministry. The war came and being a pacifist, he was sent to work on a farm. He was still doing farm work and also still toying with entering the Ministry when he met Beryl but discovering that he would have to be a Minister for 7 years before being allowed to marry, this idea was quickly dismissed.

They married in 1951 and Ken re-ignited his interest in architecture and began his 7 year training course. After a time, he began working for a practice in London as a draughtsman and continued his studies externally, qualifying in 1959. He set up his own practice the next year with a capital of £100. Ken was driven and ambitious and the practice thrived and eventually he employed 10 people but doing all the designing himself. As the business expanded, so did life at home – four 'little Cheesemen' were added to the family in the space of 8 years.

At this time, Ken was working mostly on schools but gradually churches, housing and a factory were added to his repertoire and he also landscaped a golf course and a section of the Norfolk Broads. The churches were mostly non-conformist and Ken's brief was mainly updating and additions. He beautified 92 churches in all one gaining a design award which he received from Sir Basil Spence. He was also commissioned for one synagogue, one new build church in Africa and one curious 'Lighthouse' church where the 'light' lit up during the service and where he was

invited back to preach. Stained glass windows (one consisting of 32 panels) and one 12' bronze sculpture in the shape of a flame also bear his name.

So, what else did he do? He was a Magistrate for for 20 years, a Rotarian for 23 years and continued to be a preacher. He was also involved in amateur dramatics for 20 years

Having been gradually winding down his practice, Ken finally retired in 1990. He then had time to devote to his studio in The Barn. His output of drawings and paintings was prolific and he produced enough material for 35 exhibitions. These were held in aid of Cancer Research and those, together with the 'big breakfasts' held in the village hall, he and Beryl between them raised £67,000 for the charity.

Ken is blessed with a very, very supportive wife and Beryl was probably the inspiration behind many of his artistic endeavours.

Sheila Redman

MEL'S BIG BREAKFAST

On March 11, Mel Morgan held a fundraising breakfast at Jasmine Cottage to raise funds for Cancer Research. It was well attended, mostly by ladies who breakfast. Happily for cake lovers, there was a wonderful spread of delicious, home-made cakes, plus some nice savouries, and plenty of coffee, juices and healthy fruit. Donations totalled £220. A great effort by Mel and those who helped her, and very enjoyable for those who came, and gave generously.

THE LAWNMOWER MAN

The lawnmower exploded and died in mid mow. Brought it inside, carefully covering the shaggy, white carpet with large plastic bin bags. Plugged it in. Another explosion. "I need a new one", says Lynnette (she who does the mowing, but not the mending). It's happened before so I examined the cable and saw the fault. Same one. Design error. "Wear on plastic sleeve at entry to handlebar control". Feeling Mr Competent now - Lynnette looking on in awe. Carefully dismantled control, cut off damaged part of cable, rethreaded new end and reconnected. Voila! But it still didn't work. Fuse?! Changed that for one I found lying about. Didn't work. Maybe that was a dead fuse? Lynnette has now lost interest and wandered off, not as impressed as before. A case of premature admiration, something to do with age maybe. No new fuses, so took the one from the washing machine. That has to work, right? Doesn't work. Must be the motor. Dismantle front of mower and stare at motor. Looks ok. Nothing disconnected or burned out. Conclusion - it is beyond human (i.e. my) capability. "Take it to the dump. I want a new one, and I'm going out now that I can't mow", shouts Lynnette. Shame to waste the cable and plug I think, so I cut off the cable and neatly coil it. I place the mower outside the front door to puzzle the neighbours. Clear all the bits and pieces and plastic bags like a good husband (Lynnette is sensitive to these considerations I have noted). Time for a well earned cup of tea perhaps.

Ten minutes later, cup in hand, I go into the bedroom in search of my book. A Christmas present just fitting for these quiet times. It's about a man standing on a ledge 2000 feet up a sheer cliff. Riveting stuff. Have I got time to read before Lynnette returns? I notice the bedside clock isn't working. Nor the radio. Nor the floor lamps. I check the fuse box to find the circuit has tripped out.... No problem. Hang on. It's the same circuit I plugged the mower into. Erm, could that mean...?

So, boys and girls, the question is: do I mend the cable, tackle the whole mower thing again to check if I actually did repair it the first time or do I just pretend it still doesn't work and buy a new one? After all, it is 10 years old and wasn't great anyway? Or am I just being lazy? Such are the moral dilemmas one encounters in retirement.

I said nothing and left it in the rain outside.

Epilogue

The following morning.... "Well, is it fixed yet?" says Lynnette. Spirit rebooted, I get the mower from the porch - evidently not of interest to any DIY inspired passerby - and retrieve the toolbox from the garage. I re-lay the plastic, undo the whole thing again, reattach the (now shorter) cable etc. etc. etc.... To test it, I press down on the handle bar to raise the blade from the floor and press the ON switch. VOILA!! It works... and immediately chews up 3 plastic bags and spews the little black shreds, plus innards full of damp grass and twigs, all over the room. That's my morning gone.

Moral? There has to be one....

Colin Chapman, Hoddern Farm

NEWHAVEN INCINERATOR VISIT

Noel West is organizing a visit to the Newhaven Incinerator and Veolia are happy for this to take place, but they restrict the maximum number of people in each party to 20. If you would like to be included please let Noel know on 07766 661066 or noel.west@sky.com. Its first come, first served and no date yet but Veolia say visits are very popular so expect sometime late summer.

NOT QUITE THE LAST GOODBYE

Richard Way on moving out of his village comfort zone in Piddinghoe to a basic flat in 'town'.

My mother died in June 1999. Having been diagnosed with cancer of the oesophagus in April, it was a merciful release.

I felt bitter at first, knowing that an operation to put a tube down her throat to divert the oesophagus had gone wrong and had punctured it so that any food or liquid went straight into her system. A nasty death which seemed like ages but was actually only two months.

I felt bitter towards the surgeon who had carried out the operation, and towards Christianity, as mother had been a devout churchgoer, mostly in Piddinghoe but latterly at St. Michael's in Lewes when a rather left-wing vicar took over the parish in the village.

I felt bitter, too, that prior to the cancer getting her she had endured pain and overcome the ordeal of a broken hip incurred whilst tripping over a pot-hole on the way to the village green. Fortunately she was insured with BUPA so she had the best treatment available. It took the surgeon three separate attempts to get the bone to heal. This was over the course of a year, and she had finally got the 'all clear'.

Mother left her estate and the cottage to be divided between my two sisters and myself. Unfortunately I couldn't afford to buy them out so after probate was settled, which took about a year, Flint Cottage was put on the market. It was sold after forty-two viewings via Rowland Gorringe, who handled the sale with utmost professionalism.

Some of the viewers were clueless when I showed them around at weekends. Either the garden wasn't big enough or the ceilings

were too low, for example. What did people expect when buying a country cottage?

When the cottage did sell, it meant me having to move out and finding a new home. This meant clearing three generations of accumulated goods. There was still some of my grandmother's furniture and ornaments, plus my parents' gear (including a load of barge and boat memorabilia stored in the loft, shed and garage). Gorringes took the furniture away to their auction rooms and the rest had to be cleared by myself and Chandra (Jane was away in Switzerland).

At this time I was a regular customer at the hardware centre at the top of the town in Newhaven. The owners, Dorothy and Martin Gregg, had become my friends, as had their son Bill who serviced my machinery and was always telling me off for not checking the oil in the mowers often enough or letting the blades get too blunt.

When told of my accommodation problem, Bill said his parents had a small flat above the hardware centre (one of the best shops in the town at the time) that I could have. With the sale of Flint Cottage imminent, I went to have a look at the flat which was small but I thought at least it was a secure roof over my head with people I knew and trusted.

Moving from a three-bedroom cottage with a garden, garden shed, larder, broom cupboard and airing cupboard to a one-bedroom flat was stressful to say the least, but I had some really good friends in The Ship Hotel in Newhaven where I worked in the afternoons, and they agreed to help me move.

They mustered three transit vans and a Range Rover, and we managed to get all my gear and furniture into the vans in one go. They carried furniture and electrical appliances, including a washing machine and fridge freezer, up a flight of fire-escape steps, and installed all in my new home. Everything else was in

black bags or boxes but at least I had a home, albeit very different to what I had been used to.

Once this was done I took the team down to The Ship and treated them to several well-deserved beers and a selection of rolls which the landlady had prepared. They had turned down my offer to pay. When they were sufficiently replenished they went home and I walked up to my flat. On good advice from several villagers the first thing I did was make up the bed and find the kettle. I then did about two hours of unpacking and enough was enough. I watched a bit of television and then went and got a Chinese take-a-way which I enjoyed with a bottle of wine, and then retired to bed.

The next day was Sunday, so I had time to do some more unpacking and furniture arranging. Bill came round and connected the washing machine and helped place heavier furniture (how many landlords do you know who would do that on a Sunday?). On Monday I walked to the village to go to work. I did this again on Tuesday and decided after these excursions that I was half knackered before I'd even started work, so I opted for the bus from then on.

One of my best friends, Colin Burgess, who drank in The Ship and had a hotel in Eastbourne, was also good friends with Bill, who did all his DIY, decorating and property maintenance. He told me that one of the flats upstairs from me, which was three times the size of mine, had become available and I could move into it if I chose. It also had a balcony (on which I now grow tomatoes, runner beans, herbs and flowers).

It would only cost me a fraction more in rent, and he said I would be mad to turn it down. I thought about it and decided that the stress of repacking stuff and moving it up yet another steep flight of stairs would be too stressful, so I initially said no. Colin told me that he and Bill would organise the move and do all the physical work, so (thank God) I changed my mind. They moved

everything upstairs in a matter of hours, and only charged me a few beers which were chilled in the fridge.

I have been here now for 15 years and couldn't be happier. Bill looks after everything maintenance-wise in the flat, as well as keeping my garden-machinery ticking over. There are four other flats in the block - mainly occupied by Poles, who are hard-working, friendly people and look after my plants while I'm away.

Bill is good friends with Stuart Kennedy who owns Dees Newsagents. Whenever Bill is away Stuart steps in and has helped me out with machinery, lighting, TV and other problems. So as long as I can manage the stairs this is where I will stay.

Richard Way

GARDEN REFUSE

If you take garden refuse to the Hoe please remember:

Compost heap: leaves, grass, rottable green waste only.

Bonfire: all wood, thick roots, ivy.

Your dustbin/Newhaven dump: metal, plastic pots, bin bags etc.

Our thanks go to Jim Harvey who works hard at maintaining this facility for the benefit of all villagers. He does this voluntarily and the least we can do is put suitable waste in the right place!

THE SUSSEX OUSE VALLEY WAY

Call me a slow starter, but it took me some 2 years after moving into Old Cottage, to realize why so many walkers and cyclists passed my front door. They were constantly asking me if Piddingham had a pub or café, especially during the summer. So I asked them why past my front door?, and then the hidden secret was revealed: The Sussex Ouse Valley Way.

Since moving in, the river has fascinated me, with its constantly changing scenery, and although it is generally quiet now, in the past it was a highway for moving goods in and out of Lewes and beyond. The captains of those long forgotten sailing ships must have been great sailors, no engines to help them; they manoeuvred, using the tide and wind, demonstrating fantastic seamanship skills. They could certainly have taught the Charter Skippers of today, a thing or two.

Where does the river come from, where does it start, what countryside does it pass through and how has it influenced the history of our people and countryside? Luckily Jane and I came across a wonderful book, titled simply, "The Sussex Ouse Valley Way" by Terry Owen and Peter Anderson, with a forward by Ray Mears, Jane's boss. This book splits The Way into 6 sections, each about 7 miles long. Every chapter gives easy to follow directions on the route, and at the same time gives a history of where you are passing through.

We have now nearly walked all of The Way, using sections from the book. The Ouse starts near Horsham and ends up in Seaford Bay, covering 42 miles, and was opened in 2005. Why Seaford Bay you ask? That's because before us humans interfered with the course of the river, it ran into Seaford Bay, and if you look carefully, evidence of this stills exists. Walk down to Tidemills, and carry on in a westerly direction, and all will be revealed!

Every so often when the weather looks ok and we are up for a walk, we choose one of the sections, park at one end, find a pub for lunch at the other end, and then walk back. It's a great way

to spend a day, in our beautiful countryside. I sometimes feel like Michael Portillo with his Bradshaw's, as we wander up and down the Ouse Valley with our book in hand, although we do not change the colour of our jackets at every opportunity.

One of the highlights for us has been The Ouse Valley Viaduct. This is very easily missed, travelling by train up to London, but on the ground it is one of the wonders of the Victorian Age. It still retains the power to impress today as its 37 arches stride across the valley, supporting the busy schedule of a mainline railway. It is 96 feet high and over a quarter of a mile long. But how many bricks did they use? Michael knows, he recently featured it in one of his television programmes.

So what about Piddinghoe and The Sussex Ouse Valley Way. Its route goes down beside the river to Deans Farm, travelling southwards, in fact exactly where the new section of The Egrets Way is. From there it crosses the C7, up the bridle way towards Peacehaven, but then moves off to the left, to emerge half way up Harping Hill. It then goes down Harping Hill across the C7, into our village and turns left down to the river, by Saltings. We already have The Egrets Way but it's called The Sussex Ouse Valley Way!!

The following is an extract from the book about Piddinghoe:-

"The round tower of the church at Piddinghoe supports a glided weather vane surmounted by a sea trout rather than the dolphin of Kipling's verse. There is another verse about Piddinghoe:

Englishmen fight, Frenchman too;
We don't, we live at Piddenhoo.

This may show a very human wish to keep one's head down and get on with life untroubled by the outside world, particularly if one was in the middle of warring parties and, war or not, if one of one's major occupations was smuggling."

Nothing seems to change much!

Noel West



THE GREAT PIDDINGHOE BAKE OFF



Two more recipes from Jill Hentschel.

CHOCOLATE CAKE

First, weigh four eggs, in their shells. Then you need:

Self-raising flour. The weight of the flour should be the same as the weight of the eggs, less 1 oz.

2 oz cocoa power

1 tsp baking powder

Soft margarine (or sunflower spread) – same weight as the eggs.

Castor sugar – same weight as the eggs.

Half a dessert apple or a cooking apple of the same size.
(You could add a good tablespoon of apple sauce instead).

60g dark 70% chocolate, chopped up.

1. Beat fat and sugar.
2. Sieve flour, cocoa powder and baking powder and mix together.
3. Add eggs 1 at a time to a mixing bowl, with a little of the flour mix.
4. Fold in the remaining flour mix and chopped chocolate, using orange juice or milk to soften the consistency.
5. Bake in two greased/floured sandwich tins (8 inch size) at 175°C for half an hour.

6. Remove from tins, allow to cool, and sandwich together with raspberry or cherry jam.

The cake will be better if you can leave it in an air tight tin for a day or two. (*If you can wait that long – ed.*)

HONEY BISCUITS

4 oz butter
 2 oz coconut oil
 4 oz dark brown sugar
 2 oz castor sugar
 2 oz honey
 1 egg, lightly beaten with 1 tsp vanilla essence
 ¼ tsp cinnamon
 1 lb self raising flour

1. Warm the fats, sugar, honey and cinnamon in a saucepan, until all is melted.
2. Pour into large bowl and leave to cool.
3. Stir in egg, vanilla and flour.
4. Roll teaspoons of mixture into balls.
5. Put onto lined baking tray and flatten slightly.
6. Bake at 180°C for 12 minutes or until golden brown.

This is a good, basic mix, to which you could add chopped ginger (stem or crystallised) or cherries if you like.

If you have any favourite recipes or tips, please let us know so that we can share them.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO 'THE VILLAGER'?

Articles, letters, snippets are all welcome. Or you might want to discuss an idea with one of *The Villager* team. The names of the team are given on the first page of the magazine. You can always stop and talk to us about contributions. And, remember that Sheila Redman is our 'News Hound', and wants to make sure that *The Villager* is fully up to date with what is going on. There are three important things to mention.

1. If you want to contribute an article, please try not to make it longer than about 500 words. You don't have to write as much as that, of course. We can accept far less! We have to set a limit in order to make sure that we have enough space to include everything that regularly goes into the magazine, plus room for contributions. Unfortunately, the magazine, because of technical reasons, plus costs, can't be ever expanding!
2. We will always set a deadline for contributions. See below. If you send in your contribution right on the deadline we can't guarantee inclusion in the magazine. It would be very helpful if you could send your article in with some time to spare.
3. We really would appreciate having your articles as Word docs, attached to an email. It makes it easier for all of us working on the magazine.

Two of us – Bill Pierce and Gill Davies – are very happy to be involved in discussions with anyone who wants to write something, or to provide a helping hand if needed. As well as talking to them, you can contact them through email.

Bill's email address is: piercewilliam991@gmail.com

Gill's is: davies.gill@btinternet.com

The deadline for contributions to the next Villager is May 17.

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