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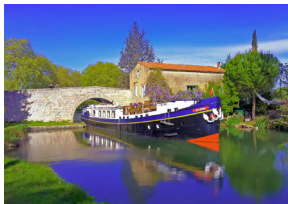
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Below: Two of our European Inland Waterway Vessels:
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THE WESTWELL EYE

174

August

2017



George Horne's 2nd prize winning sheep at the Kent Show

4th August
8th August
14th August.
27th August.

No Coffee morning
Book Club, p.13
1.30pm Westwell Art Group
Fete - p9

SUNDAY	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
3 8th Sunday of Trinity 8am Holy Communion St. Mary Westwell	4	1 11am Book Club p13	2	3 R.F.W.G 9.15am Pilates 10.30 Dog training	4 10am Eucharist	5
6 9th Sunday of Trinity 11am Iona Eucharist St. Mary Westwell	7 7pm Fitness	8	9	10 R.F.T. 9.15am Pilates 10.30 Dog training 7.30pm WI	11	12
13 10th Sunday of Trinity 10.30am G7 Service Charing	14 1.30pm Painting 7pm Fitness	15	16	17 R.F.W.G 9.15am Pilates 10.30 Dog training	18	19
20 11th Sunday of Trinity No Service - St. Mary Westwell Fete	21 7pm Fitness	22 7.30pm Players Play Reading	23	24 R.F.T. 9.15am Pilates 10.30 Dog training	25 Sept 1	26
27	28 7pm Fitness	29	30	31 R.F.W.G 9.15am Pilates 10.30 Dog training	2	

From the Editor's desk...

Summer holidays are here again, how time flies!

There is no Fitsteps this month, but all the other regular activities are keeping going in August.

This month sees the Fete on Sunday 27th – see page 9, do support this ever popular event and let's hope the day is dry, it makes such a difference.

There is an up-date on the local plan on page 5 - important to read.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the hard working Parish Councillors who are working relentlessly to get the best way to keep the Wheel open, do support them as I am sure none of you want to see the pub close permanently.

Carolyn Thorneloe ✍

The views of any contributor to this publication may not necessarily be those of the editor and team, nor can the Westwell Eye accept any responsibility in connection with any companies or organisations mentioned or any advertiser.

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Useful Contacts

Telephone Numbers

Age UK	642094
Ashford Volunteer Bureau	633219
Bees (swarming)	
Andy Bithell	740650 / 07933892413
Borough Councillor:	
Larry Krause	01233 643497
CAB	626185
Carers Support Group	664393
Childline Freephone	0800 1111
Cinema	0871 2208000
Citizens' Advice Bureau	626185
Cruse Bereavement Counselling	878225
Doctors (Charing)	01233 714490
(Hayesbank)	624642
Dog Warden	01233 330340
Hospital (William Harvey)	633331
KCC Community Warden for Hothfield and Charing - Dave Beckley	07811 271306
CROP	01622 851200
Library (Ashford)	03000413131
(Charing)	713177
MS Therapy Centre	01227 470876
NHS Direct	0845 4647
NSPCC	0800 800500
Parish Hall Booking	01233 712016
	doriscackett@btinternet.com
Parish Council (clerk, Sue Wood)	623902
Pilgrims' Hospice (Admin)	504100
(Patient enquiries)	504112
PCC Secretary (Heather Lister)	712981
PCSO	angie.burden@kent.pnn.police.uk
Samaritans	610000
Shopmobility	621196
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Victim Support	0845 30 30 900
Water Supplies Queries	0333 000 0002
Water Leak Line	0333 000 3330
Wealden Wheels	01233 840000
Wheel Inn (landlord James Meire)	712430
Westwell Community Website:	
http://www.westwellpc.kentparishes.gov.uk/	

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1st Charing Scout Group

Our new headquarters now has a roof and we are planning to install doors and windows in the next few weeks. We are now approaching the time when there are lots of jobs that need time, but little expertise. If you have a couple of hours free at any time please contact me. Sadly we didn't win the Calor grant. We are so grateful to everyone who supported our bid. All I can say is that the winners must be pretty special for the judges to choose them over us.... Our scouts are camping at the Kent International Jamboree. What a fantastic opportunity for them!

The Great Charing Colour Run on 1st October will be our major fundraiser of the year. Check our Facebook page and make a date to run, walk or just get creative with colour! There will be lots to do for supporters as well as participants. It will be a real family occasion
gsl_charingscoutgroup@hotmail.co.uk **Terry Lister**

World War 1

My Father never really talked about his weeks in the trenches but I recall him singing songs from those times like "Roses of Picardy" "when the Poppies bloom again"etc. However the one that stuck with me all these years since childhood was this one -just a few lines it was!.

Damp is my dugout
 Cold are my feet
 Nothing but biscuits
 And bully to eat,
 Far far from Ypres I long to be
 Where the German sniper
 He can't snipe me,
 Think of me crouching
 Where the worms all creep
 Waiting for a Whizzbang
 To put me to sleep.

I wonder how many of our badly suffering soldiers sang that song before their end. The "East Surrey Regiment" suffered huge losses and those left had to carry on until other units of men were sent to reinforce them.

June Jones



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Parish Council

The Parish Council met in the hall on Monday 3rd July. The Open Session included concerns with regard to the revised draft of the Local Plan, and in particular the renaming of the 'Woodside' site (near the Hare and Hounds) as 'Land east of Hothfield Mill, A20'. It was thought that residents' attention should be drawn to this change and help in drafting and distributing a leaflet was offered.

Councillor Miss Davidson had written to the Chairman resigning from the Parish Council for health reasons. This was received with regret and Miss Davidson thanked for her service to the community while on the Parish Council. Notices of the vacancy will be put on the noticeboards, and if no poll is triggered by residents, the Parish Council will co-opt to fill the vacancy.

Larry Krause (borough councillor) attended and gave his report, noting that the decision on a previously permitted planning application at Tutt Hill House would likely remain unchanged for a current application, notwithstanding the Parish Council's objection, unless there had been a significant change in circumstances. Member grants were offered to the Hall Management Committee and Westwell Players towards purchase of new chairs and a storage facility, respectively. Minutes of the May and June meetings were approved, there were no Matters Arising. The Financial report was approved. Two planning applications were discussed, one was supported but further information sought on the second.

The latest draft of the Local Plan was discussed; there are two new sites in the parish in the revised Plan: 75 dwellings on land to the east of Hothfield Mill (previously known as the Woodside site), and 75 dwellings on land at Tutt Hill. The consultation runs until 31st August and the Parish Council will be submitting substantial responses on both sites. Residents need to comment too. A drop-in session to inform residents would be arranged in the parish hall on July 16th, and there would be further opportunities to look at the proposals at exhibitions being held by the Borough Council.

Shadoxhurst Parish Council is writing to the Housing Minister expressing concerns at national planning policy and in particular its impact on the rural areas; it is seeking support from parishes in the borough for the letter. It was agreed that Westwell Parish Council supports the letter.

The Westwell Players asked the Parish Council for permission to place a shipping container (suitably painted and screened) on the playing field, to store Players' costumes and equipment. The request will also be put to the Hall Committee and Playing Field Association, because they will also be affected.

The Parish Council had received a request to plant a Christmas tree on the church green, this will be followed-up but the correct choice of variety was stressed.

There is a need for the Parish Council to have a safeguarding policy in place; a draft policy was circulated and a recommendation will be prepared by Councillor Mrs Wyatt.

Reports were taken from Parish Council representatives: a meeting will be held with Highways on 17th July to discuss lorry parking and abandoned trailers; the Playing Field Association is organising a fun day on 23rd July; the annual tree survey was carried out by the Parish Council's tree wardens; the suitability of the matting underneath the playing field equipment was queried, the present matting is inspected annually by RoSPA. The meeting closed after Any Other business.

The next meeting is on 4th Monday September at 7pm in the parish hall.

All meetings are open to the public and all are welcome.

News on the Ashford Local Plan.

There is still time to find out about the latest draft of the Local Plan and to comment. There will be display of what is proposed at the Westwell Fete on August 27th. The deadline for comments is August 31st. There will also be a drop-in sessions to get help submitting your comments. Upstairs at the Hare & Hounds pub : mid August date to be confirmed: contact the parish clerk, Sue Wood on 627087 or ask at the H&H. Also a session during the last week of August in the Parish hall. Details will be on Westwell Facebook and sent round on Westwell Events email.

Thanks to everyone who visited the drop in session in Westwell parish hall on July 16th or 23rd or who got along to the Borough Council event in Hothfield village hall on July 21st. Contact Sue Wood if you need a consultation response form, or you can post comments on line. Getting comments in by the August 31st deadline will ensure ABC listen to views from Westwell.

What is proposed in Westwell parish?

Two sites each of 75 houses accessed from the A20 into areas that are currently fields growing crops. One is east of Hothfield Mill. This is a modification of the site that was previously submitted as "Woodside". It was not included in the Plan then because there are better alternatives, and the Ashford's housing target was lower. Although the access is improved the Local plan documents do admit that development on this site would break the western rural boundary of Ashford, this is also part of the wildlife corridor between the Warren and Hothfield Common. The other 75 houses for the parish are proposed in a field at Tutt Hill: between the Premier Inn and the Banyan Retreat. The Tutt Hill site is opposite another site being suggested for 150 houses on the Hothfield side of the road between the Tutt Hill petrol station and the Holiday Inn. Both these sites would be accessed off the A20 which is already busy and an essential route when the M20 is closed for any reason. These are sites in farmed countryside. They back onto the motorway and if developed would be visible from the Pilgrims Way.

If you have questions about how these sites would work, or can suggest conditions that would be needed to make them practical eg comments on access to schools, surgeries, shops, buses etc, based on your local knowledge please do comment. We all know that road safety on the A20 is an issue. There are no proposals to change it from a single carriageway 60 mph rural main road. Whether you are sceptical or positive about what is being proposed, Ashford planners do want to listen to your local knowledge, before any decisions are made about whether any of these sites should be either taken out or modified in the next version of the Local Plan. These sites would not be in the plan if others already approved were not held up by the Government's delay in funding Junction 10A which is needed before those developments can proceed. If these sites stay in the plan all the consequences need to be considered very carefully.


The other site in Westwell that remains in the plan is the A and B sites for Travellers off Watery lane. (S44) The access to the B site at the rear has been modified, but the site is still proposed. However Ashford planners do now say they will be doing a separate Local Plan for Traveller sites.

Please do send in your comments. Look out for the drop in sessions in August, and/or contact Sue Wood, Westwell parish Clerk on 627087 or susanwood@uwclub.net
You can go on line and access the consultation directly up to August 31st at <https://haveyoursay.ashford.gov.uk/consult.ti/LPChanges/>

Westwell WI

Following interest in joining a WI due to our write up in the Kentish Express "We don't just make jam...." we were pleased to welcome four new prospective members. We welcomed one new member from Sandyhurst Lane this month too. The evening began with the normal business and we were lucky to have reports from three events which had taken place since last month's meeting. Our mystery trip so secret even I don't know where they went; a meeting with another WI, Stockbury and the Group meeting where we were the proud winners of the competition to write a poem about London and to send it in on a framed card. Well done to Mary Ann for the words and Marylin for the art work. The talk this month was led by four lads Bill, Mark, Nick and Steve, all of whom had their own story to tell. Each one of them had, at one time, been homeless and had had the fortune to join Emmaus, a charitable organisation set up to work together to end homelessness. Emmaus supports people to work their way out of homelessness by providing meaningful work and a stable home for as long as someone needs it. The lads explained how the charity had been life changing for them giving them confidence, boosting their self-esteem and giving them a better chance in life. Emmaus helps to support itself by its shops one of which is in Bank Street in Ashford. They rely on donations of furniture, clothes, books, DVDs, CDs etc and have a van which collects on specific days of the week for those larger items should you have any to donate.

The evening ended with a cup of tea or coffee, the competition and a raffle.

Catherine Hazelden 

Next Meeting: Thursday 10th August at 7.30pm.

Talk: The Kray Brothers by John Walker. Open to members to bring their partners.

Hostesses: : Ella Young, Valerie Hooper and Betty Williams

Vote of thanks: Sue Starkings

Competition - Black

Egerton Gardens Open in August

2nd August; Mary Walker, 3, Water Villas, Rock Hill Road.

9th August; Ruth and Raymond, Shrubb, Old Orchard Cottage, Stonebridge Green.

16th August; Sue Allen, Jonstone West, Rock Hill Road.

23rd August; Margaret Morris, Burnside, Rock Hill Road.

30th August; Sally Dartnall, The Halt, Forge Lane.

£2 for a cup of coffee and a raffle ticket!

Plans

17/00786/AS Vicarage Barn, Westwell Court Installation of a wood burning stove and chimney. This will be discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

17/00931/AS 1 Gothic Cottages, Westwell Lane Proposed single storey extensions. This was supported by the Parish Council and a decision is awaited from the Borough Council.

17/00959/AS The Dairy, Westwell Court Installation of a stove and twin wall chimney in the sitting room/lounge of the property. This was discussed at the July meeting but additional information is being sought from the Borough Council; it will be further discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

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Update of The Wheel.

The report that you read in the July Eye remains entirely correct. The good news this month is that there are detailed conversations continuing between a potential tenant and Shepherd Neame. Much of this is a positive but realistic negotiation on how to make the Wheel viable.

The idea of B and B upstairs is being discussed too. That would help with the viability but also needs investment to get the accommodation up to standard. B and B is not new to Westwell, and there might be the possibility of some external EU funding - currently still available until March 2019.

Several Parish councillors are working hard to do all we can to get a viable pub open again.

The next update will be in the September Eye. For any questions contact the

Parish Clerk, Sue Wood: 01233 623902 or susanwood@uwclub.net

Westwell Parish Council

Recycling plastic items

Plastic is one of the most popular and useful materials of today, we now use around 20 times more plastic than we did 50 years ago. Luckily, we can increase the lifespan of plastics by recycling items as many times as possible.

Ashford as a whole has been doing a fantastic job at recycling and the Borough Council is delighted with how enthusiastic residents have been with the new initiative.

With our recycling figures at their highest, we want to continue this fantastic work and encourage the community to carry on recycling more of their household waste. So let's work together to create an even cleaner, greener and greater Ashford!

There are many ways you can continue supporting Ashford's recycling initiative and make the borough a more eco-friendly place to live. Do your bit for the environment by backing Pledge4Plastics, a new government supported initiative which aims to encourage UK residents to recycle more plastics from rooms all over the house.

Recycling plastics from all around you. It can sometimes be confusing knowing which items are recyclable. Firstly, it's important to not limit recycling to only kitchen items because more than just food packaging can be recycled! A range of materials from rooms all over your house can be reused.

In the bathroom for example, items including bleach bottles, mouth wash bottles and shower gel containers can be recycled. When it comes to recycling items from your bedroom, remember things like empty face moisturiser bottles can go in your recycling bin.

And in the kitchen, you can reuse plastic cooking oil bottles, kitchen cleaning bottles and even clean plastic yoghurt pots, but not black plastic food trays

Even certain electrical materials can be recycled. Items such as electric toothbrushes, mobile phones and electronic toys can be reused provided they are placed in a tied carrier bag, next to your refuse bin.

Understanding recycling symbols. Recycling symbols are now appearing on lots of everyday items to help us identify how different parts of the packaging can be recycled correctly.

It's important to take a look at the symbols printed on the product to determine how to dispose of it correctly.

Remember:

not all packaging will have recycling label but that doesn't mean you can't recycle it.

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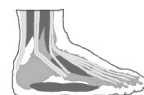
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Letter to the Parishes

August, the month when many of us will be heading off on holiday.

Do you feel dissatisfied with your lot? Do you look back over your life and think if only I had worked harder at school or travelled more or taken more risks? Do you regret your choice of career? Do you wish you could have a new car, a bigger house or more money? Do you aspire to be a famous singer, sports personality or reality TV star? Do you look with envy at other people's exotic holidays? Do you worry about the future, about things which may never happen?

Some of us have been looking at the Ten Commandments. The tenth commandment is:-

'You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.'

O.K. so slaves whether male or female, oxen and donkeys do not seem very twenty first century in any of our parishes, even in rural Kent but the underlying message is just as relevant.

The advertising industry plays on our desire to acquire things which we do not have or to buy a newer better version of something which we already have even though the old one meets our needs perfectly well.

Many of us, dare I say most of us, and I include myself in this, probably have far more stuff than we need and when we have it we worry that we might lose it and yet we still want more. Ask yourself. Have I eaten today? Do I have access to clean water to drink? Do I have a bed in which to sleep tonight in safety? Do I have clothes to put on? Do I have access to medical care if I need it? If your answer to any one of those questions is 'yes' you are better off than the vast majority of the world population. If your answer is 'yes' to all of them well you really aren't too badly off are you?

Of course there are people in our own communities who do rely on the Foodbank and it is a disgrace that in an affluent western country foodbanks are necessary and we should help those in need, but what I really want to stress is that those of us who have sufficient or indeed more than sufficient should be grateful for it. We all want to make provision for our own future and that of our children and that is only natural but we seem to spend all our time earning money to buy things that we don't really need and which we won't have time to enjoy when we could be spending that time with our loved ones?

Many people also have another feeling of wanting more, a yearning for something which they cannot identify, a sense that there is something more to life than enduring the rat race and simply acquiring material possessions at the cost of their health and peace of mind. Christians would of course say that this yearning is for God.

Near the beginning of his Confessions St Augustine of Hippo meditating on his life and coming to relationship with God says '.... our heart is inquiet until it rests in You'. What a wonderful thought. Stop tearing about and rest in God.

So enjoy your holiday, exotic or not, and while sitting by the pool or sipping your drink of choice take time to reflect on what is important, appreciate what you have now and thank God for it.

Kevin Moon 

Etc

Dates for your diary

August 28th.	Fete
September 17th	Harvest Festival
October.14th	Harvest Supper.
December 2nd	Bazaar

Dates for WAGS (Westwell Art Group)

August 14th

Book Club July 2017

Our book was 'My Cousin Rachel'. This was Daphne du Maurier's last novel, published in 1951 and made into film the following year, and now again in 2017! We met at Mary Ann's as June was not feeling well, though we managed to feast on the food she had prepared for us afterwards! The book is a typical 'did she do it' story, taking place mostly in Cornwall. Many reminders of the writer's other very famous work 'Rebecca'. We all enjoyed this book. The writer was a superb one, weaving her language so the reader enjoys every little detail. the characters and descriptions of land and seascapes, truly very absorbing. Some of us were not very happy with the ending....not very clear as to who does what in the end. But then that was her style. We may even go to see the film, though most ladies thought film versions always spoil the book.

Our next meeting is on the **8th August. 'A Street Cat named Bob' by James Bowen.** We meet at Nada's at 11am. And we have two new members too! Hope you are enjoying the summer.



Up, up and away!

If you fancy soaring through the skies over Westwell for the first time on a summer's evening, or want to repeat the experience, you'll be delighted to hear that the gliding evening is being held again.

It's in the late afternoon and evening of Friday 18th August (time to be confirmed) - flights with an instructor plus the chance to take the controls if you dare.

Tickets are £25 for a flight and barbecue, but numbers are limited so it's first come, first served. If you just want to watch, it's £5 for the barbecue - drinks will be on sale in the Gliding Club's bar.

Contact Sue Wood for your ticket (01233 623902, susanwood@uwclub.net) or more information.

Proceeds in aid of the St Mary's improvement project.

Challock Flower Festival

August Bank Holiday weekend 26th, 27th, 28th 10am - 5pm Challock Church, Church Lane, TN25 4DB

The theme this year is "An Afternoon Tea with Beatrix Potter and Friend".

Grand Raffle, Bric-a-Brac, Tombola, Refreshments - Famous for delicious homemade cakes and ploughman's. Live music by Suellen, The Challock Choir and more. No entry Fee, free Parking.

Westwell Church Services for August

www.g7benefice.org

Friday 4th:

10am Iona Eucharist

Sunday 6th: 8th Sunday of Trinity

8am Holy Communion

Sunday 13th: 9th Sunday of Trinity

11am Iona Eucharist

Sunday 20th: 10th Sunday of Trinity

10.30am G7 Service - Farewell to Archdeacon Philip Down

Sunday 27th: 11th Sunday of Trinity

No service - Village Fete

Tuesdays:

9am Charing – The Eucharist

7pm Charing Heath – Prayer and Bible Study

Family Church in August

Both Messy and All age services are resting this month.

There will be a Benefice service on August 20th in Charing at 10.30 instead of the normal all Age service to say goodbye to the Archdeacon, Philip Down.

September services

Messy on **3rd September** will be celebrating small things, because Little things can mean a lot. Find out more at 3.30 in the Parish Hall.



17th September at 11am in church will start the Creation season with Living Water, we will also celebrate a baptism in the service.

This is not a Harvest Festival service. The creation season continues until 15th October when we celebrate Harvest Festival.



Coming Up soonish:-

The PCC discussed ideas to exploit the best qualities of the Church.

1. Have a monthly Charity collection to extend our help to others whose need is greater.

Possibly combined with a monthly coffee morning? Interested? Let us know.

2. Remove nine surplus Pews to give more space at the back for moving around.

Are you interested in buying a Pew? Ask the churchwardens for more details.

3. Display the plans for the changes at the back to provide loos and kitchen area so that everyone can see what we're hoping to achieve.

4. Look out for the Open evening and Days in September so that you can find out more.

5. Invite more people into the churchyard to enjoy the peace and tranquillity. We are hoping to buy some benches so visitors can sit back and enjoy the surroundings.

What do you think?

Get in touch with the Churchwardens or any member of the PCC to let us know your opinions.

PCC members

Stephen Bates; Jolyon Drury; Penny Knatchbull; Saskia Leigh-Pemberton; Heather Lister; Joan Richards; Evan Thomas.

Church Cleaning Rota.

Cleaning Wendy Bartlett

Flowers: Penny Knatchbull

Brass: Sheila Filmer



Westwell Fete Day Sunday 27th August

This year is Special : A Back to Back Extravaganza on the Playing Field :

8am – 12noon : Fete setting up, 1pm – 4.30pm Westwell Fun Fete

5pm – 6pm Fete clearing away and starting the evening with beer and music

7pm – 11pm Westwell Fun Evening :

Beer Tent, Food and Music including Reggie and Soul band .

The Westwell Fun Fete will be the traditional event from 1pm until 4.30pm starting with the Dog Show and ending as always with the famous Westwell Egg Throwing Competition. Bring the children, to participate in the Children's races, tug of War and to experience the amazing low flypast display by the Sky Bird of Prey Team.

All the usual side shows and stalls : as at the end of July we still need to allocate a few so please let Sue Wood know if you would like to run one of the stalls.

The innovation this year is an all day beer tent which Nick and Tracey are organising, that will also house the traditional Pimms table.

The beer tent will stay up for the evening festivities.

A big thank you in advance to Nick and Tracey for organising the evening: much needed while we don't have The Wheel to go to.

A key part of the Fete is the Raffle: Tickets are on sale now. All the usual great prizes:

Family days at Leeds Castle: Port Lympne or Howletts Animal Parks:

Gliding and Birds of Prey experiences and lots more.

Thanks to all of you who have taken several books of 5 to sell on.

More available from Sue Wood 623902 or Christine Drury – text to 07796 930430.

Joan Richards and the raffle ticket team will be selling them on Fete day, but it always helps the fete finances to sell a good number in advance.

We will have a brilliant book stall, but still more of those cracked mugs and crockery for the crockery smashing: put them in a bag or a box and bring them to the Parish Hall: leave them in the back room (the Cole Room). If the hall is not open contact Doris Cackett. Good clean unwanted presents and pre-owned items you'd be happy to admit to: bring them all along so they can be used for the bric a brac and tombola stalls. If you are wondering what happens to any unsold items or unclaimed tombola prizes, everything it packed away and taken to the Pilgrims Hospice warehouse after the Fete where they are a much welcomed benefit to that organisation too. This year we will divide items between the

Hospice and Emmaus, who have now set up in Ashford.

The Fete is an essential fund raiser for our parish community: the projects needing support this year are the Loos and Kitchen project for St Mary Westwell and more comfortable chairs for the Parish Hall.

We always put 10% towards a charity. Pilgrims Hospice has been suggested for this year.

Diary dates

Pre Fete clean up of the field at 10am on Tuesday Aug 22 nd

And Pre fete meeting on Tuesday Aug 22 nd at 7pm in the parish hall.

Grass pickup and marking out day Saturday Aug 26 th

Fete day Sunday 27th August. Lets make it another Westwell Amazing Day

Christine Drury



Westwell Players

Players are mostly resting at the moment but we did have a most enjoyable evening in July reading the new Pantomime, 'Once Upon A Time' with the right people reading the right parts, i.e. the ones they have been cast as! However we had a large number of absentees due to holidays or summer colds or suchlike. Despite that the reading was excellent with the Dame proving to have been very well cast as she/he had learnt most of her/his lines, a fact that made everyone else in the cast look on in awe and hopefully, go home and start to learn their own part so that they can be well ahead with their words too! Is this to be a first for Westwell Players, with a cast ready to start acting straight away with words all salted away safely in the memory bank??? Watch this space! Who will be fluent for the next read through? This will be on TUESDAY, 22ND AUGUST, in the Parish Hall at the usual time of 7.30. Will Red Riding Hood have slain the wolf, or Alice in Wonderland have found her seven dwarfs, so far we have at least 5 wonderful children, all raring to go and be Westwell Stars for three nights running, maybe by then another two will have been found? Cinderella and Snow White are both busy polishing their tiaras and the two handsome Prince Charmings are busy trying on their tights (well that is the rumour that is fast spreading around the lanes of Westwell) Keep your eyes open, you never know what you might spot on a summer's day! More next month and well done to all Westwell Players who are learning well into the night, great will be your reward – Sarah and Gordon are planning and plotting and getting all the ancillary helpers lined up. If you know of anyone who would like to come and make the tea or help with the costumes or any of the many other things that we need, please let me know on 713002, Meanwhile, enjoy the rest of the summer and may it be as good as it has been so far – fantastic!!

Mary Anne Pitt 

Westwell Events by Email

Westwell Events is a simple e-mail service which keeps local residents informed of forthcoming events such as Fun days, Exhibitions about plans which will effect the Parish, Church events etc.

If you do not receive these useful emails at present, and wish to do so, please send an email to westwell.events@gmail.com and you will be added to the list. We promise not to overload you with unnecessary or irrelevant emails, and you can stop the service at any time. No ads, no cost, just useful information and we guarantee your email address will not be shared with anyone else.

If you have an event you wish to publicise, please let us know.

Martin and Tessa Wyatt

August on Hothfield Healthlands



The glory of Hothfield in August is the purple heather or ling, *Calluna vulgaris*. This year there were sprigs in flower already in June, and the pink cross-leaved heath, *Erica tetralix*, had as usual started even earlier. *Calluna* and *Erica* grow together on the dry heath, only *Erica* tolerates wet bog.

Richard Mabey writes of these low-growing evergreen shrubs as the raw material of frugal domestic life, along with companions bracken and gorse. So heather here could have been used for fuel (ling comes from the Anglo Saxon work lig for fire), fodder, wattle in daub, thatch, brooms (*calluna* is from the Greek for brush), baskets, fencing, twisted into ropes, packing material or mattress filling, the roots carved into small useful items, although tobacco pipes were made from roots of the continental tree heather, hence briar from the French for heather, *bruyere*. The flowers might have yielded orange dye and honey from wild bees. A local volunteer now keeps an apiary nearby. Flowering tips might have been used for tisane or to flavour and filter beer, leann froach in Scotland.

Wildlife was in amongst the heather before humans found it useful. In the same family as bilberries, rhododendrons and blueberries, it provides shelter all year for basking reptiles and birds, hopefully for nesting tree pipits one day; thousands of seeds for feeding birds, foliage food for caterpillars and grazing sheep, nectar and pollen for insects and butterflies and moths, which are food for patrolling dragonflies and birds. Heather needs nutrient poor soil and grows slowly; the progress from fresh green pioneering seedlings through maturity to the eventual collapse of gaunt woody plants is monitored

and managed across the reserve.

Gardeners have a wide choice of cultivars of several species including tree and winter heathers to provide flowers almost all year round, a feast for the eye and a wonderful larder for garden wildlife.

The name Hothfield for this area, meaning heathy open land, can be traced back to around 1100 AD; also in Kent, Hoath from La hathe was used from the 13thC, in Sussex Hoathly from 1287 and Hadleigh from 1121. The names all derive from the Old English word *hath* meaning heather. Heathrow in around 1410 was La Hetherewe, middle English for a row of houses on or near the heath. Heath results from centuries of low-impact grazing and felling and these names indicate how widespread heathland was and how great the losses in the southeast. Now rarer than rainforest, heathland is one of our most threatened habitats, hence Hothfield's designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, the grazing animals and the team of volunteers who work to clear encroaching scrub on a regular basis. There is no white heather here but we are very lucky to have this remnant of rich diversity so close by, and need to keep it connected to the living landscape around.

The heathland is open to all, including dogs kept in check; a human toddler can become terrified of dogs, not knowing that an unleashed bounding dog larger than her just wants to play. Various trails are signposted and indicated on the maps at entrances, which also give the location of the livestock. The noticeboard down the main slope from the Cade Road car park gives recent wildlife sightings. For email alerts on the location of the livestock, or to join the volunteers who help maintain the reserve, check the cattle and carry out summer surveys contact the Warden on 01622 662012 or at ian.rickards@kentwildlife.org.uk.

Margery Thomas