

THE VILLAGER

December 2017



Piddinghoe
East Sussex

EDITORIAL

This time of year, the start of the long lead-up to Christmas and New Year, always seems to bring a surfeit of depressing news. So we must be careful to stay at least cautiously optimistic.

We have endured tales of the sleazy antics of that chubby, stubbly-chinned film producer in Hollywood and other theatrical types on this side of the pond; some dubious goings-on in the dark corridors and ante-rooms of what has now become known as 'Pestminster'; and the continuing litany of some of our former heroes being brought to book, or at least placed under suspicion, by the police retro-squad. That is all on top of what looks likely to be the eternally gloomy outlook for the tiresome business of Brexit, and now, most recently, another grim reminder of our mortality when hearing of the almost simultaneous passing of Rodney Bewes (*The Likely Lads*) and David Cassidy (*The Partridge Family*). If you haven't heard of them then you have hardly lived yet.

So what is the answer to the question of trying to lift the mood as we prepare to celebrate what should be our biggest annual festival of joy? Retreat a bit into the bubble, maybe. Tell ourselves that all those people indulging in dismal behaviour out there are not us and do not have anything to do with us. It may not work very well on a long-term basis but perhaps we could give it a try because there is plenty for which to be thankful in our lovely environment.

In these pages we aim to bring villagers all the local news and interesting snippets that are fit to print and enjoy. So please read and believe in what we wish you – a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

The team: Sheila Redman, Gill Davies, Bill Pierce, Sue Massey, David Aicken.

PIDDINGHOE PARISH COUNCIL 2017

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Village Hall, Piddinghoe, on Tuesday 14th November 2017 at 7.30pm (DRAFT)

Present: Councillors, Nick Woolger, David Aicken, Debbie Mills, Angela Ridge.

Julian Peterson (Clerk). 7 Members of the public.

Apologies for Absence: Cllr Vic Ient, Gill Davies, Noel West.

Minutes: The minutes of the Parish meeting of 8th August were AGREED by Council and signed by the Chairman who chaired that meeting.

Disclosure of Interests: Non-pecuniary interest declared for agenda item 4 by Cllr Mills and Cllr Ridge for ownership of fields that access the Sailing Club's Path. Cllr Woolger as a member of the Sailing Club.

Public Participation: Quincy Whittaker suggested that Item 4, the byways application on Sailing Club land be deferred for further fact finding from the applicant and the Sailing Club. Stating it would be useful for residents to hear the nature of the application and possible objection.

Caroline Richardson agreed that the Village Hall would benefit from interior modelling by an architect to gain space and improve the acoustics. As in item 7.

On item 8 a resident was pleased that Lewes District Council were sending an officer round to survey the rat problem in the village.

AGENDA

1. Council accepted the accounts as up to the date of the meeting as prepared by the RFO Cllr Debbie Mills.

Current Account: £5,580.61

V. Mellor's Bequest: £25,441.00

Reserve Account: £3,000.00

2. Council approved the draft budget for the years 2017/2018. Council agreed for the third consecutive year not to increase the precept in spite of a reducing grant from Lewes District Council and the Council's reserve account increasing.
3. There were no planning applications to discuss.
4. Council agreed to defer a decision concerning the byway application through the Sailing Club. Council had received correspondence from an officer of Egrets way wanting to establish that Egrets way were not involved in this application and had reservations as to the consequences of the application. However, since the meeting the clerk has been advised that since this application is on private land this issue should not be raised on an agenda until further notice.
5. Council agreed to continue with its research into Village land and assets.
6. Council agreed retrospectively with the placing and nature of the footpath signs.
7. Council proposed to engage an architect to remodel the interior of the Village Hall to improve and increase the space used by residents. It was suggested that Council may ask the architects who are designing Dormer House and another.
8. Council was pleased that LDC were sending an officer in December to assess the rat population and presence in the village.

PROGRESS REPORTS

1. Downlights to Village Hall. The downlights are working, but Cllr Aicken will investigate the timing with the contractor.
2. Dates of Air Ambulance presentation. Village Hall committee were not interested, so invitation was not sent.
3. The Clerk was asked to find a tree surveyor.
4. Quotes for a book keeper for HMRC. Cllr Mills found three quotes and is continuing with the process.
5. Progress on steps from Hoe to Riverbank. Sufficient information has been sent to the Environment Agency to get a licence. The project may now need to wait till spring due to the winter weather.
6. Progress report on fences down from the riverbank. These have been completed. Cllr Mills is waiting for a confirmation of a grant from ESCC.
7. Progress report on Hunter and Kissing gates. The gates are in place. Project completed.
8. Progress on the All-Weather Path. This has been completed.
9. Progress report on the Dog Poo Bag Dispenser. It was noted this is for a trial period only and can be moved. But that it should be placed on a post near the barn.
10. It was agreed that the Clerk and Chairman do an up to date risk assessment of the Parish assets and that the Village Hall Committee are asked to do a risk assessment on the Village Hall.
11. Dates for the next meetings:
9th January 2018, 27th March, 8th May (AGM and Parish Council), 29th May (Parish Meeting), 7th August, 13th November 2018.

Julian Peterson, Parish Clerk, Piddinghoe

BYWAY APPLICATION

An application has been submitted by an individual representing the Ramblers Association, to register the Sailing Club track as a Byway, allowing formal access to carriages, cycles, horses and pedestrians.

The Sailing Club have confirmed that they have no intention of restricting access to walkers on their track.

The applicant states it was '*prompted by his knowledge that it formed part of the Egrets Way Route*'. However the Egrets Way Committee, who first brought this to our notice, were unaware of the application and wish it to be known that '*they have not been involved with the Ramblers Application in any way*'.

Egrets Way are very happy with the agreed Riverside route around the top of the pond and wrote to the applicant concluding with:

'...while we appreciate your having considered what you believed to be the interests of the Egrets Way in your byway application, we feel that any suggestion that the Egrets Way is linked to it could be seriously damaging given the progress we've made.'

The applicant did not consult with the Egrets Way Committee, the Sailing Club, Farm landowner or Piddinghoe Parish Council before his application was lodged.

The application is at this website address:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/leisureandtourism/countryside/rightofway/the-definitive-map-and-statement/claiming-or-changing-a-public-right-of-way/current-applications/>

To express any views on the application, you can email **definitive.map@eastsussex.gov.uk** or write to East Sussex County Council, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes BN7 1UE.

David Aicken

PIDDINGHOE PARISH COUNCIL 2017 ROUNDUP

Piddinghoe Parish Council is a small elected group who voluntarily try to do their best for the village. Again there has been progress in several areas this year. And despite the projects that have been achieved, with prudent financial management, we are likely to have no rise in the precept for the third year running.

The completion of the village hall road, turn-round and illumination are a great improvement.

The all weather footpath was completed at a cost of £19,020 funded by The Newhaven Community Fund. It is more engineered than anticipated, and I am aware of mixed feelings about it; however it will complement Egrets Way as a footpath section (where cyclists are required to dismount) and accommodate any extra foot traffic the Way will bring.

The well worn parish border fences by the river were replaced, hunter gates (supplied by South Downs National Park) were installed and a kissing gate installed on the private land to the Hoe side of the bank for pedestrians. These again will be partly funded by a grant.

Small signs indicating the footpath section have been displayed and when Egrets Way comes round the pond with a slope up the bank to the south gate, a 'cyclists dismount' or similar sign will be considered.

The steps from the Hoe to the river bank are taking far longer than anticipated due to the need to obtain a licence from the Environment Agency; they don't seem to be very quick at making formal decisions.

The play area monthly inspections reported various items of wear and tear, all of which were dealt with.

Your Councillors also regularly attended a number of meetings during the year, of which Parishes of the Lower Ouse and C7 Safety Group, were but two. In addition to this there were meetings with the Egrets Way committee, to keep updated on its progress. Reminding Highways to cut verges and hedges that had been overlooked has been necessary. We have found during the year most agencies, organisations and councils have been cooperative whenever we have approached them.

A village memorial board or sculpture is being discussed at the moment for the bereaved to attach small plaques in memory of village residents who have passed away. Any ideas for this are welcome.

The problem of dog poo never seems to go away, so a bag dispenser has been obtained and will be erected as an encouragement to some of the less responsible owners. We can but hope!

Unfortunately dutch elm is still around and we expect to have to pay for more cutting.

On a positive note we are looking at ways to optimise the layout of the Village Hall to make any forthcoming events more comfortable.

You may have noticed it's nearly Christmas, so very best festive wishes to you all from your Parish Council: Angie, David, Debra, Julian our Clerk, and of course me.

Nick Woolger
(Chairman)

WELCOME FEEDBACK FROM CYCLE SEAHAVEN

Late in October I received a letter from Cycle Seahaven about the article we printed in the last issue, describing how Moya was knocked flying by a cyclist swooping down Harping Hill. The club Secretary expressed great regret at what had happened and thanked us for bringing it to public attention. The Secretary said that they are confident that their members would give proper consideration to pedestrians they encounter, but they were going to remind them of the importance of giving an early warning of their presence on a local road – perhaps best done by the use of a cycle bell. Indeed, I checked their website shortly after, and on the opening page, due prominence is given to a message saying just that.

We have no idea, of course, whether the cyclist who knocked Moya over was a member of any club, but it is good to get such a rapid and helpful response from a local one. They have also written to Moya to say how sorry they are and that they wish her well.

We look forward to more tinkling in the air.

Gill Davies

VILLAGE HALL EVENTS

PAST

Friday, October 20

There should have been a packed house to hear Ian Everest talking about Shepherding on the South Downs. Unfortunately this was not so and a handful of villagers were supplemented by a group of Ian's followers from Seaford. Ian has remarkable knowledge of rural life in this area and apart from all his research into the subject, his family had first-hand knowledge and experience of shepherding. In his illustrated talk we were told of the very important role that shepherds played and for which they were very highly respected by local farmers. Sheep rearing was not so very long ago very big business on The Downs.

It was a very interesting 'INTEREST EVENING'.

FORTHCOMING

December 8 - Quiz 7.30pm

A light hearted and enjoyable evening with nibbles and a bar. £10 per table of four.

February 3, 2018 - Winter Warmer 12.30pm

Lunchtime soup and bar.

The Wednesday Fun and Games Evening is to be re-instated. Join us for table tennis, darts, etc. starting on Wednesday 6th December at 7pm.

N.B. We are on the look out to find ideas that are popular and encourage villagers to meet and enjoy time together. We are entirely open to suggestions and would love to have your thoughts on the subject. Pop your ideas through the letter box.

Sheila Redman

FILM NIGHT STARTS A HOME-RENT SCHEME

After the success of *The Viceroy's House* (September) and *The Well-digger's Daughter* (October) in terms of audience-size and favourable review, I might have become a little carried away when presenting an arguably politically-incorrect movie for November's Film Night in Piddinghoe Village Hall.

For a start, it had to be shown on a different night than usual, a Wednesday, because, in this last short month, the number of Fridays when I was not already committed to more important objectives such as family, work and holidays, were non-existent.

Yet the main worry I had was that although *The Woman in Red* was seen at the time of its production (1984) as merely a comic and colourful romp through American West Coast social misbehaviour, we have all learned a lot more since then about encouraging discipline, loyalty and equality. At least I hope so.

Whether there was a suitable response through numbers of attendance on the night and a positive critical reception cannot be gauged in this issue of *The Villager* as the copy deadline for the magazine's production passed before the actual showing of the film. So maybe I will revisit this issue later but meanwhile hope the film was well received and won't have put anybody off attending the next one.

That will probably be just AFTER Christmas – perhaps back to a Friday on December 29 when we all might like a break from the festivities and have a quiet night in front of the big screen. This, and the title of the film, to be confirmed.

Of course, film-goers can still have their say in that. Don't think you have to leave it to me to decide. At the start of the winter series of Film Nights I conducted a straw poll of what you would like to see. There was a solid response and the two most-voted films have now both been shown while the third choice, *A United Kingdom* is still a possibility, should there be a groundswell

of opinion. Once again I invite you to bombard me with your suggestions of what would make enjoyable viewing. I promise to consider each one.

I know it is a sad fact that many people who would like regularly to attend Film Night cannot do so through one restriction or another. People often go away at weekends, making Fridays difficult. A few other nights are already booked out to alternative activities in the Village Hall and I'm glad to see darts and table tennis evenings apparently set to be revived.

So this is one reason why I have taken up the excellent suggestion of my neighbour Julie. We are calling it 'Rent-a-Film-Night', a scheme in which villagers and their friends can hire from me the DVDs of films they have missed at The Hall. It has been decided it will cost £3 a week per film, in aid of Village Hall funds, to hire a film for home showing. So if you cannot get there but want to see any of the films past, get in touch and come and collect. A long list of available DVDs has been emailed to all who have attended Film Night in the past and can be made available to anyone on request.

Bill Pierce

1 Cedarwell Close T: 07971 611431 E: piercewilliam991@gmail.com

KELSEY'S LIMERICK

There once was a man, a gypsy
 Who was very, very tipsy
 He came from London
 Got put in a dungeon
 For being drunk on whisky.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, PIDDINGHOE

On Thursday November 2, the Venerable Martin Lloyd-Williams, Archdeacon of Brighton and Lewes, the Reverend Judith Egar, Rural Dean of Lewes and Seaford, the Rector, the Reverend Tim Mills and I met to discuss the future of St John's.

Threat of closure has been held over this Grade 1 listed Church for well over a decade now, but, thanks to the work of both the PCC and interested Parishioners, it continues to serve this Village, as indicated by the two Baptisms and two Funerals, essential pastoral Services, in addition to bi-monthly Sunday worship, which have occurred since Isla and I moved into 'Chambles'. Very recently, a young man rung the door bell, enquiring about a wedding for his Fiancée and himself in 2018.

No final decision was made at the meeting, but the Archdeacon noted both the recent clearance effected by a number of Villagers and several discoveries made by the NADFAS Team, which are adding to the history of this ancient Church.

The reality is that Churches are pastoral institutions, but they also have to function in a business-like way, which means keeping the books balanced: paying the Building Insurance, maintaining the lighting and attempting to heat a space, much of which is well above height level. It is a struggle, but both Tim and I will do all we can to keep St John's accessible for the Village and its families and we shall let you know what the Archdeacon decides.

In the meantime, special thanks to Richard Draisey, who laboured for three days to clear and cut up the dead tree which had fallen across the Church path and, please, if you are not yet a Friend of St John's and can spare £5.00 a year, think about becoming one. Forms are in the Church and here at Chambles.

Remaining Services in 2017

Sunday December 10, 8.00 am:
Holy Communion, Book of Common Prayer

Sunday December 17, 6.30 pm:
Carol Service, followed by light refreshments

Sunday December 24, 11.00 pm:
'Midnight' Communion for Christmas

Mary Sitwell

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AT ST JOHN'S

The Rev. Mary Sitwell officiated at a Service of Remembrance on November 12 to honour residents of Piddinghoe who had taken part in the two World Wars. The turn-out was pleasing and it was particularly good to see in attendance villagers who are comparative newcomers to Piddinghoe. Villagers recited poems and gave readings from The Bible. Unforgettable was Jim Harvey's stunning rendition of 'Dulce et Decorum est' by Wilfred Owen. There was a trumpeter who sounded the Last Post and Reveille. Candles were lit, hymns were sung and prayers were said. Perhaps the most moving part of the service was when Don Burdett read out a list of those who had served in the Wars, including those who had been killed. The list was far longer than many of us would have expected. It was a dignified and moving service which allowed those present to remember and respect those from our village, and indeed of our country, who served, and it emphasised the futility of war.

Gill Davies



GRASS ROOTS

Concerning the Decline in Insect Populations, Fennel and Bistort

We have recently learned in the news of current research into the serious decline of flying insects, which is causing naturalists, entomologists, scientists and environmentalists extreme concern. A loss of 75 per cent over 30 years has been recorded in Germany, triggering urgent study. Yes... I remember my driving days in the 1970s, having to stop and wash hundreds of tiny squashed bodies off my windscreen just to see where I was going.

Caspar Hallman of Radboud University in the Netherlands refers to this as 'the windscreen phenomenon', 'where you squash fewer bugs as the decades go by'. Scientists at Radboud who conducted a survey report that the dramatic decline was seen to be regardless of habitat, land use and the weather, leaving them at a loss to explain what was behind it. This loss of insects has far-reaching consequences for entire ecosystems. Bats, birds, amphibians and reptiles rely on insects for food. Plants rely on insects for pollination.

What can we do?

The answer is: more of what we try and do already.

We have to grow insect attracting plants in our gardens, and protect our local wild areas. Don't dig up those flowering 'weeds' in your garden, especially if you see insects on them. They are wild plants and have a purpose. Let them grow; enjoy them and the wildlife they attract.

Angie's Tip: Plant some *fennel* in a sunny spot and leave it alone. In the summer it will grow tall and reward you with a mass of yellow flowers and insects by the hundred, especially hoverflies. They love it.

We can conduct our own surveys and monitor the biomass of our own local insect populations. From Spring onwards, stand and wait by a patch of wildflowers and watch the insects that visit. Look them up, identify and photograph them, and see if they return next year.

In Brookside by the car park, grows a wild plant called *Common Bistort* (a member of the Dock family). It has been parked on many times, squashed and mown but thankfully it came bouncing back. It has attractive red cylindrical flowers, and in July was covered in bees and many other insects. The Latin species name *bistorta* (meaning twice twisted) refers to the shape of the rootstock. This species was referred to in 16th century herbals as Snakeroot. Indeed, extracts were used to treat snake bites, infections of the mouth and throat, and also diarrhoea.

Please don't mow or park on it next year!

Angie Ridge



Common Bistort

THE ROBIN

It seems that most gardens have a resident robin. Recently, it was voted Britain's National, and most popular, bird. If you cannot recognise a Robin, then you will never have spent Christmas in the British Isles, for the robin features liberally on Christmas cards. In snowy scenes, on garden spades, on letter boxes, doorsteps, in holly trees, in fact, in pretty well any situation. Their cheeky redbreasts and friendly, fearless manner, plus their sweet winter song endear them to one and all. Especially when the days are cold and dark.

Wordsworth wrote:

'And thou the bird whom men love best,
The pious bird with the scarlet breast,
Our little English Robin...
The bird who by some name or other,
All men who know thee call their brother,
The darling of children and men.'

Folklore once had it that the robin was a pious bird, covering the dead with moss, It was also regarded as privileged - almost holy.

The robin brings a flash of brightness whenever he/she (the sexes are indistinguishable) is hopping about our gardens in search of titbits. (In my garden searching hard, for there are some 20-30 sparrows competing for the food that I put out.) The robin is also the only bird that sings throughout the year. In Winter, he is singing to claim his territory and to find a mate.

He will attack any other male robin who thinks of straying into his space. With his red breast puffed out, he may quickly chase off an intruder and will battle it out ferociously until he is victorious, or has to retire.

The male robin who sings in December is also singing for a mate. If a female robin likes the look of him, and quality of his song, she will come and join him in his territory. She chooses him; not

the other way round. They will form a pair but will not start nesting until March. They remain mates until after the nesting season, and then each will go its own way. They may get together again the following year, but might find another bird to mate with. The robin is not long lived. The one in your garden today may not be the one a year ago. Fifty per cent of robins live only for 1 year, but if lucky, they can live up to 5 years. The oldest ringed bird found so far was 12 years old.

The robin is an attractive, engaging little bird. It seems to like the company of humans, and is very often quite tame. It will take food from a person's hand. This one (below left) decided to explore my conservatory. It was August and he was moulting.

The next photo (below right) on a frosty January morning, all puffed up to keep out the cold, he perched on the fence and didn't move when I approached him. I don't know how big his territory is, so he may be your robin as well!

Julia Clayson

P.S. There is a very recently published book by Stephen Moss called *The Robin: a Biography*.



WHAT BEING 'ON THE DOLE' REALLY MEANS

Anybody over 50 years of age will almost certainly know what 'being on the dole' means: out of work and relying on state charity – now covered by the general term 'on benefits'. It is rare that a true example, with historic definition, comes to light. It has, in the form of a hand-painted board discovered in the west end of St. John the Evangelist in Piddinghoe, where currently the Eastbourne Church Recording Group is at work. 'Dole' has many meanings: among them 'alms', and 'charitable gifts'. A 'dole bag' formerly described a bag carried by an official charged with the distribution of alms.

The 'Dole Board' at St John's lists, very clearly, specific amounts of money left by Elizabeth Croft, in mid-Victorian times, to selected groups. The detail is unequivocal but did it possibly give the incumbent some difficulty in honouring the brief? We shall never be certain. But what remains are the instructions.

The board details the amounts granted from £350 worth of consolidated stock left by Elizabeth Croft in memory of her husband Hugh (died 1866) and her son Gilmore Winton (died 1869) and her granddaughter Edith Gilmore (died 1868 aged three months). We know the donor and have the amounts. But the recipients are harder to find. The detailed instructions on the board give an insight into how Victorian charity was dispensed.

'The interest arising from £100 to be known as Little Edith's Treat to be expanded (sic.) on the 19th of July each year in a treat to the children of the National School of the said parish (Piddinghoe). In rewards more especially to the girls who are skilled in plain needlework and to the boys and girls who are neat in their dress, clean in their habits and regular in attendance in church and school.

'The interest arising from £150 of the said stock to be known as Hugh Croft's Gifts, to be given on January 19th of each year, in coals, clothes or money, in such proportions as the incumbent

shall think fit, to the heads of families and widows. Such persons being regular attendants and communicants at the parish church and keeping their homes in an orderly clean condition.

'The interest arising from £100 of the said stock to be known as Gilmore Croft's Rewards, to be given in money on the 22nd of February each year, in equal proportions to three single men, or any less number and three single women, or any less number, of virtuous report, between the ages of 17 and 30 years. These being sons and daughters of residents in the said parish, who shall produce to the incumbent the most satisfactory characters from their employers.'

It must have been difficult for the Vicar to select the right candidates to receive Mrs Elizabeth Croft's largesse. Surprisingly the bequests were still alive in 1985. The interest has of course much diminished (some £20) and we have not found anything further from the records after that date.

Susan de Angeli

Postscript: the Rector, Rev. Tim Mills, has located the annual accounts, to the end of 2016 and discovered that the Little Edith Fund stands at £729.24. On July 19, 2018, he will be in a position to hand out some 'treats'.

Don Burdett has pointed out that in the north aisle of St John's are memorial windows to Hugh Croft and Gilmore Winton Croft.

ART JOTTINGS

Watts Gallery Artists' Village

I love the Arts and Crafts movement but had never come across Watts Gallery Artists' Village until Sheila mentioned it to me. It is just outside Guildford in Crompton and is well worth the trip. It was created by George Watts and his second wife Mary Seton Fraser Tytler. His first wife was the great actress, Ellen Terry. He was 69 and Mary was 36. He was one of the greatest painters and sculptors of modern times. Mary was an artist, still seeking to find expression for her remarkable talents. Despite the differences in age, background and professional standing, the marriage was to be a happy one.

They settled in Crompton and enjoyed it for only 13 years before Watts's death in 1891. Once mistress of her own home, there was no stopping Mary's confident ambitions as a designer. (Good for you Mary!). She built the Watts Chapel with its stunning decoration, and established a pottery business which became the Compton Potters' Arts Guild. From there the Watts Gallery emerged in 1904. It was a charismatic Arts and Crafts building. Mary died in 1938 and the pottery closed in the 1950s. The Artists' Village shrank to just the Watts Gallery. Eventually a campaign to restore the Gallery began and now Compton teems with art and ideas again. One of Watts's most majestic sculptures is a huge man on horseback - 'Physical Energy'. The full-scale gesso model is on display there. The pottery buildings now house the Visitor Centre, wonderful shop, Watts Tea Shop and a new space - the Watts contemporary Gallery. The Chapel and original house, Limnerslease, are also open and there are woodland walks.

Nearer home: I am showing in a group **Christmas show at the Crypt Gallery, Seaford**, December 2-20, 10.30-5pm, Sunday 11-3pm. I will put a flyer on the noticeboard. Do pop in!

Gill Autie

THE BONFIRE: SOME BURNING ISSUES

We are so lucky to have this amenity in the village (by The Hoe) and Jill and Jim deserve recognition and much appreciation for all their efforts in managing and burning it which is physically very hard work.

It had grown particularly big in the last few weeks of summer and early autumn with weather conditions such as rain and wind direction having to be taken into account. The South-west wind blows the smoke away from the village but Jill has had some complaints from people living on the other side of the valley. In consideration of all the work involved it is essential that only burnable garden-waste is taken there.

Furniture, bricks and plastic should be taken elsewhere (not in the village) and there is a refuse site no more than a half-mile away in Newhaven.

Grass cuttings should not be dumped on the bonfire but in the space provided for that purpose at the bottom of The Hoe.

Finally, waste should be put on top of the pile and a space left at the sides for access to the top.

Many, many thanks for co-operation.

Sheila Redman



TODAY

Today is not like yesterday, the earth has moved on and so must I. The joys and sorrows that were so true have passed into the memory, to be brought back heightened or dimmed as my mood shall decide. But gone they are, and to this day must I say 'I am here!'

What was of yesterday suited yesterday, and was of its time and purpose. If I cling to past moments I miss the purpose of living today.

Cornelius Cheeseman

December 1992



RATS

When our cats resided in our home all vermin were kept at bay. Unfortunately due to a change in circumstances, our cats are no longer with us and rats and mice feel free to roam in our garden and dance energetically in our attic.

They have now been exterminated but to prevent re infestation we have taken the following steps that I now share with you:

1. We only leave water out for the birds because bird food attracts rodents. If you do feel obliged to feed the birds please put the food in hanging feeders away from fences and walls, (rats will leap from a wall onto a feeder), and also put boards around the feeder to prevent rodents from gaining access by climbing up the pole.
2. Bird food could be left out during the day but must be taken in at night and all food cleared from the ground. Rats especially have a keen sense of smell and once they have discovered a food source they will follow it day after day.
3. It is not really necessary to leave food out for the birds because shrubs and hedges that have berries, e.g. hawthorn, and wild flowers provide a good source of food for birds.

We do not have a compost heap or keep chickens but if you do, the pest control officer gives the following advice:

Avoid putting meat and eggs in your compost heap. If you keep chickens please keep to a strict feeding regime and do not leave food in feeders overnight.

There are of course other ways of dealing with rats. Bert Christensen's *Weird and Difference Recipes* provide some interesting ideas for cooking rats and of course you can always watch Monty Python, Season 3, Episode 4-2 on You Tube!

Carolyn Richardson

PIDDINGHOE PEOPLE

Dennis Stow of White Cottage

In hearing Den's so-far-as- it-has-been-lived life story, signs were evident from boyhood of budding entrepreneurialism and of 'going places'. He was born in Kent whilst his parents were living on Green Hythe Marshes. As soon as he was able to ride a bike, he was off to supplement the family food supplies by catching fish, eels and rabbits. The much used cycle transported him to school – a journey of 8 miles each way. A while later, his parents moved from The Marshes to live near a quarry, which has since become the Bluewater Shopping Centre. Foraging continued and he, not with any enthusiasm, attended the same school which he eventually left at the age of 15.

By this time, Den decided that he needed to begin his education, and to earn some money. He became an office boy at G.E.C. which was 15 miles from home. Cycling was still his only mode of transport. A career based on engineering beckoned, and as an engineering apprentice, he spent 1 day and three nights each week studying. The apprenticeship lasted for 5 years after which Den became a draughtsman working with steam and gas turbines and still with G.E.C. who had recognised his potential. He was moved to Newcastle but after three months, rumours of redundancies were circulating so he decided the Civil Service was a safer bet and joined the Ministry of Defence as an instrument designer and tester of military hardware. The next promotion led to designing weapons, which included bombs, missiles and warheads.

Then came another step up the career ladder to become senior project design manager for Polaris, designing warheads and military hardware for the British army. A number of these are still in use in today's modern army. He had not finished with education at this stage – he still went to night school until he was 35, gaining a 1st Class Hons. in Engineering, an M.A. in Management and an M.Sc in Aerodynamics and Ballistics.

In 1990, Den resigned from the Min. of Defence and started his own business as a consultant in Management, Quality, Health and Safety and advice in general. He is still doing this to a lesser extent today. During this time he was also manager of a ballistic test centre for military arms in Devizes, and carried out product auditing for intrinsically safe products used in mining and oil field production. In this capacity, he travelled the world.

On a more personal note, Den was married in 1970, had one son and lived in Kent. His wife died and he married Carolyn whose talents have proved an enormous help, particularly in his travels when she has been an invaluable P.A.

They moved to Piddinghoe in 2008. Den soon found himself on the Parish Council and was Chairman for 5 years.

Den's has been a life of high achievements – but he still loves foraging!

Sheila Redman

A MESSAGE FROM SUZANNE HARVEY

Just to say a big thankyou to the villagers who attended the BBQ in July for thinking of me and making donation to Lupus UK.

I am sorry I was not well enough to attend, but I am pleased to say I think my treatment is beginning to work for me. I am pleased you all had a great time and the weather was kind.

Once again, thankyou.



THE GREAT PIDDINGHOE BAKE OFF



Another recipe from Jill Hentschel

PARIS BREST (my version)

Best served on the day of cooking. The choux dough can be made the day before and stored in a sealed bag in the refrigerator.

This can be used with either savoury or sweet filling, e.g. cream cheese/smoked salmon/ham etc. You can make it with any fruit, plus ½ pint of whipped cream, 1 tsp icing sugar and a little of liquor of your choice if liked. You can also add a few flaked almonds. Try a tin of mandarin oranges.

For the choux pastry you need:

3 oz sieved plain flour

1 ½ oz butter or margarine

¼ pint water/fruit juice

2 beaten eggs

1. Drain oranges reserving the juice. Pour 1tbs Cointreau or liquor of choice over the orange segments.
2. Put about 3 fl oz of the juice and 1 fl oz water in a saucepan with the fat. Heat but do not boil, until the fat is melted. Remove from heat.

3. Add all the flour and beat with a wooden spoon. Return pan to heat and continue beating until mixture forms a ball and comes away from the sides of the pan. Leave to cool a little.
4. Pour in the eggs, a little at a time, beating continuously. Mixture will be smooth and glossy. Then put into a piping bag with a 1" nozzle (or use a freezer bag and snip off one corner). Pipe into a circle on a lightly dusted baking sheet, about 8 – 10" wide. Sprinkle over the flaked almonds. Cover with a large roasting tin.
5. Bake at 200°C fan or 220°C without fan, for 40 minutes. DO NOT remove the roasting tin during this time or the mixture will drop.
6. After 40 minutes, remove from oven and take off roasting tin. Prick all over quickly with skewer to let out steam and return to oven, without roasting tin, for about 10 minutes to crisp and brown.
7. Whisk cream and flavour with about 1 tbs Cointreau or other liquor and 1 tsp icing sugar to sweeten.
8. When cool, slice horizontally and fill with flavoured cream and fruit. Dredge with a little icing sugar.



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 550 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
January 23rd.*