

Parish News

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF FRANT, ERIDGE & BELLS YEW GREEN



Eridge Park by Andrew Gilpin, via Flickr

IN THIS ISSUE...

3

Letter from the Rectory by the Reverend Brendan Martin

4

Church Services, features & News from the Pews

7

Information on getting involved in the Queen's Green Canopy

8

Latest news and updates from Frant Parish Council

9

A village sign for Frant? See the plans and have your say...

10

What's on in the Parish: events, useful contacts & dates

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From the Rectory



As we head into 2022, I thought I would look back and see what I wrote this time last year. If you remember, we were in the middle of lockdown, and none of us knew at that stage that it would be such a long and tough year for so many people.

Yet in January last year we had hope - hope that a vaccine would be made quickly enough, hope for the end of lockdown, hope for starting things again. We saw amazing responses from people helping and supporting one another: from our scientists who pioneered new vaccines and drugs, to our wonderful NHS staff and key workers and the volunteers who helped at vaccine centres. Hope in many ways brought out the best of human nature.

Last year we looked forward in hope to rebuilding our community, and in the past months we have seen lots of community events come back, which has been fantastic, but often challenging, as more people contracted covid locally.

So this month, at the beginning of another new year, before we dwell on what lies ahead, we should look back, and remember. Remember the hard times, remember the suffering for so many, but also remember the hope we had for better times to come. And they will come.

The rebuilding of community is only just beginning. As a church, we want to help not only rebuild those relationships within society which have been on hold and are now re-emerging, but also deepen and expand those links with each other.

Relationships are right at the heart of what it means to be human, what it means to have a sense of worth and place in the world. As a Christian what drives me to want to build and deepen our relationships within society, is our God who, by his nature, is at the heart of the bonds between us. The Bible says God is love, and it is a love that cannot be contained.

God's love reaches out to everyone, he has come for us in the person of Jesus Christ, and now seeks every heart with that message of hope and love for today. So that we might know that we are never alone.

Not only do we want to build a community which puts care for each other at its heart, so that no-one ever feels isolated again, but my prayer is that we would know the loving hand of God who is with us, and for us, and saves us.

So get involved: we're setting up Connect home groups this year, for Christians and those who are new to the church and curious, and you can find out more by calling me 752003. Get in touch: follow us on social media (search for "Frant church" / "Eridge Church" to find our accounts on Instagram and Facebook, which have regular Q&As, event reminders and helpful Bible quotes). Join us on our mission of building relationships with God and each other. Let's use 2022 to build a welcoming, supportive, vibrant local community for us all.

— Reverend Brendan Martin



News From The Pews

In November you may have heard the half muffled bells being rung before the Remembrance Sunday service which as always, was poignant and moving. This year it was lovely to hear the last post played live on the trumpet accurately and professionally by Uzazi Esalomi. In the afternoon 14 people attended the Act of Remembrance at the Memorial Hall. Also in the afternoon, Imtiaz and Roger Hulbert led a service with live music in the Rectory Paddock to remember the persecuted church, and to pray for Christians worldwide who suffer for their faith. Throughout the autumn, people continued to attend the outside services enthusiastically and sit round the fire in their coats with their hot drinks. Festival Church outside services are having a break now until the beginning of February.

Christmas began with the Christingle Service on 5th December. Due to the covid situation particularly among the children, the service was held in the paddock. Around 55 people braved the drizzle and the wind and were rewarded with fairy lights, fires and carols as well of course with Christingles for the children. We actually learned how to do one of the carols, 'go tell it on the mountain', in Makaton sign language, which was new and interesting. A very good beginning to

the festive season.

This year once again we sent Christmas gifts in shoe boxes to Eastern Europe. The number of boxes we sent was less than in previous years, with more people opting to send a donation to allow a box to be filled on their behalf, apparently standard shoe boxes are quite difficult to come by now. These gifts are so very much appreciated by those who receive them, and we in turn have received some heartfelt and humbling expressions of gratitude. We also supported the West Kent Women's Refuge at Christmas by sending gifts of toiletries and money.

The winter clear up and tidy of the churchyard began at the beginning of November. Apart from the wonderful team who regularly cut the grass and look after the churchyard, just a few people turned up on Saturday mornings to help, thank you to them.

At St Albans and Holy Trinity we are dedicating 2022 as a 'Year of Creation', and a group of volunteers from both churches have begun meeting to think practically about what our contribution might be, and how we can better care for our world.

Denis Youngman who died in November was a lifelong resident of the village, having lived in the same cottage for 87 years. Brian Gill wrote this tribute which was read at Denis's funeral. 'As

far back as one could remember Denis's truck would be parked at the Church where his skills as a man of the land were vested in the care of the Churchyard. His attributes were many - managing awkward hedges and rebuilding the Churchyard wall among them. Worldly wealth was of no interest to Denis and any gratuities he received he would pass on to the Hospice. Invited into his home, an old cottage on the Mayfield Road where he lived by himself for many years, one would be shown things which spoke of antiquities, hear about how he and his brothers all slept in the same bed and be alarmed at how, to keep warm he used to nurse his one bar electric fire on his lap. Eventually, in 2015 the time came for him to go into a care home where people went to see him, although by then his memory was failing. Hospital admission and further care followed. It is good to know that in death he is back with the land he loved so much.'

His Christmas wreaths of holly and greenery were always in demand and he also made the traditional besom brushes of birch twigs. Again, the income he made from these was given to Hospice. Denis never moved with the times, he never craved the fashionable and he never wanted more, he'll be remembered as a true countryman, an example of contentment with what life gave him.

St Alban's, Frant & Holy Trinity, Eridge

Rector

The Reverend Brendan Martin — 01892 752003; rectoryfrant@gmail.com



www.frantchurch.org
Churchwardens
 Jane Emler—532233
 Juliet Nightingale— 01580 200403



www.eridgechurch.org
Churchwardens
 Jonathan Lynn—864304
 Stephen Barnes—861302

Services for

January / February 2022

9:30am	Morning Service.....	2nd January	Communion Service	11:15am
9:30am	Communion Service.....	9th January	Morning Prayer	11:15am
9:30am	Morning Service.....	16th January	Communion Service	11:15am
9:30am	Morning Service.....	23rd January	Communion Service	11:15am
9:30am	Communion Service.....	30th January	Morning Prayer	11:15am
9:30am	Frant as One (All Age service).....	6th February	Communion Service	11:15am
9:30am	Communion Service.....	13th February	Morning Prayer	11:15am
9:30am	Morning Service.....	20th February	Communion Service	11:15am
4.00pm	Festival Church.....			
9:30am	Morning Service.....	27th February	Communion Service	11:15am
4.00pm	Festival Church.....			

WORSHIP AT BELLSYEW GREEN

Sunday Services: 10.30am & 3.00pm / Bible Study & Prayer: Thursdays, 7.00pm / Enquiries: Peter Arrowsmith, 01892 610309



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The Queen's Green Canopy

The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invites people from across the United Kingdom to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee".

On 10 December last year, Rev Brendan Martin had a great time outside in the fresh air in Eridge Park to witness two Elm trees being planted as part of the Queen's Green Canopy tree planting. The trees were planted by Lord-Lieutenant Andrew Blackman and Nus Ghani MP, with Lord Abergavenny and lots of local people and groups represented. This really marks the start of a year of jubilee celebrations, celebrating the Queen's 70 years on the throne, in which millions of trees will be planted.

Everyone from individuals to Scout and Girlguiding groups, villages, cities, counties, schools and corporates will be encouraged to play their part to enhance our environment by planting trees during the official planting season between October to March. Tree planting will commence again in October 2022, through to the end of the Jubilee year.

With a focus on planting sustainably, the QGC will encourage planting of trees to create a legacy in honour of The Queen's leadership of the Nation, which will benefit future generations.

As well as inviting the planting of new trees, The Queen's Green Canopy will dedicate a network of 70 Ancient Woodlands across the United Kingdom and identify 70 Ancient Trees to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years of service.

Let's get involved as a Parish! If you are planting a tree, why not take a

photograph and send it in to carmel.kinley@gmail.com. Photographs will be published in the July 2022 edition of this magazine together with Jubilee celebration memories.

Parish Past

It is surprising how much of the past one can visualise just moving around the parish. Frant is an unusual name amid all the -hurst -den and -field suffixes common in the Weald: its meaning "the place of the ferns" implies a local landmark rather than an early settlement. Eridge - "the ridge where eagles fly" is similar.

Around 1500 or more years ago what is now our village green probably attracted locals to bring their livestock to feed and water in an open clearing where otherwise there was mostly dense forest: a natural pond long existed where the children's play equipment now is. It is striking that when a settlement did emerge probably around a wooden hermit's chapel and possibly in the 800's (first reference to a church is later) it spread in a straight line from this holy area to the common grazing around that useful pond - our High Street.

Several centuries later the focus of the parish was on its landowners, situated in Eridge and Bayham Abbey. Old maps show Church Lane curved nearer the brow of the hill to end opposite the still existing entrance to Eridge Park - rents,

judgements, serf duties all went that way and people who mostly walked chose the shortest route. Church Lane was probably straightened with building there in the early 19thC. The road east to Bayham of course still exists, the curve past Mastingate aiming directly at the Abbey. Before BYG however, there is a sharp bend near Stubby Grove - why, if people then naturally chose the shortest route? There's no obvious reason for it today but back in the Middle Ages there was a small village here called Lye Green and you didn't make muddy tracks across your neighbours' common pasturage. You politely went round it. The hamlet disappeared in the 16thC during enclosures for sheep but the ancient Green still shows on an 18thC map but as a field and of the village only two buildings then remained. Wattle and daub cottages were easy to knock down in the name of profit, those two more substantial buildings still survive today.

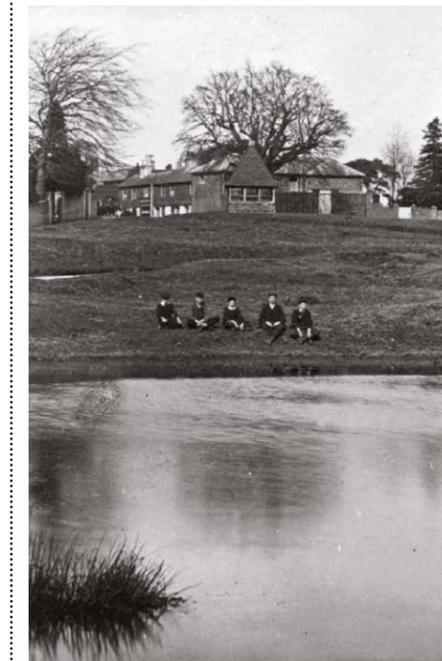
In a different direction, if you drive to Mark Cross the road takes a couple of sharp bends around what was an Iron Age settlement on Saxonbury Hill. But, as you approach these you can see that before these bends the road aims directly for the crest of the hill. More than 2,000 years ago this (then) woodland track went where it was needed, up to Saxonbury and its iron production, but once this industry changed and moved Saxonbury lost its importance, probably just after the Roman period (AD 350/400 and we know that during their time here the Romans bought iron from there) no one wanted a stiff climb for no purpose and they began to go around the easy way, as we do.

But next time you go that way perhaps remember for a moment that the short stretch of tarmac you are using is actually a track more than 2,000 years old. —Pat Wright

Bells Yew Green Village Hall Vacancy

The Bells Yew Green Village Hall committee is looking for a new treasurer. The committee is a small group of enthusiastic volunteers working hard to run and improve this important community facility. The demands on the treasurer are not great and you will have fun working with like minded people.

If you are interested please contact Rob Wallis on 07572650898 or robwallis120@hotmail.com



Frant Green Dew Pnd, c.1900

Parish Council News

As I write this Covid and its latest reincarnation castes yet another long shadow over us all. Timing its resurgence just in time for Christmas of course!

Our Clerk has the unenviable task of decoding the current Government guidelines which state Zoom Parish Council meetings are not allowed and yet under Plan B face to face meetings aren't either!

Despite all this Parish Council business continues apace. Finger posts (Hawkenbury Road) have to be replaced, plans are commented on, Frant Green continues to suffer under a motorised onslaught and thoughts about next year begin to emerge. A special year for our monarch of course and we will be pleased to support any proposed celebrations or other ways of marking this incredible achievement. There is for example some momentum for a village sign in Frant but its design and location will prove challenging but if there is sufficient support for it then we will certainly seriously consider it. I'm sure the 'George' and the 'Brecknock' will also not let next year pass too quietly!

I attended the Frant Christmas Fair last week and it was very well supported and the weather kind. I used the opportunity to air the issues concerned about the proposed pedestrian crossing by the Abergavenny Arms. This is a long standing issue which the Parish Council are fully in favour of, as a traffic calming measure apart from anything else, but we don't seem to have the universal support from some of our 'partners'!! Your views over the coming months will be much appreciated and very helpful.

The Parish Council wish you all a peaceful and happy New Year and the hope that surely things can only get better in 2022 with life returning to some sort of normality?

Frant Parish Friendship Group

Our last two meetings of 2021 were very well attended and very enjoyable. In October we had Michael Smith giving a talk on Ernest Shackleton. Michael did have some incredible pictures to show us of the expeditions however due to a technical error we were unable to access the projector - disaster! Not at all Michael then proceeded to give the most informative and entertaining talk on the life of one of our most colourful explorers. There was also a local

connection in that one of Shackleton's financial backers was J.Q. Rowett who lived at Ely Grange and was a well known Frant benefactor.

» Sir Ernest Shackleton and John Quiller Rowett, aboard the Quest, RYS, August 1921.

Helen Carpenter was born in South Lodge, Ely Grange and her father worked for Mr Rowlett. Helen has kindly written down some of her memories. printed below.

Following Michael Smith's recent talk to the Friendship Group on Sir Ernest Shackleton's expedition to the South Pole, a little more information can be added especially his connection with Frant and Ely Place, now known as Ely Grange and at one time the home of John Quiller Rowett. Rowett and Shackleton were both students at Dulwich College and that is where their friendship began. Mr Rowett gave large sums of money to finance the expedition.

Whilst the boat - The Endurance - was being prepared in the pool of London, frequent journeys were made from Ely Place to convey fresh garden and dairy produce for the crew.

When the expedition ended, many items, including the small boat which rescued the crew, were brought back to Ely Place including the flag which covered Shackleton's coffin. This was later presented to Dulwich College and displayed in a glass case over the library door. Children of Frant School were invited to Ely Place to view the boat and write a story about it. The boat is now suitably displayed within the College.

To enable the crew to keep in touch with families and friends, Shackleton provided postal facilities. At a dinner party hosted by Mr Rowett, Sir Ernest Shackleton was one of the guests and knowing that another guest had some children, he handed over some of the special postage stamps which were also subsequently presented to Dulwich College.

Like many large estates in those days, Ely Place had its own cricket team and members of the crew came to Ely Place to play against the home team.

The children of John Quiller Rowett at play in the James Caird at Ely Place, Frant, 1922 This was the lifeboat used in Shackleton's Endurance expedition, now in Dulwich College.

Photos kindly provided by Jan Chojceki, grandson of John Quiller Rowett.

In November we had our AGM followed by a Fish and Chip lunch. This was very well attended by 32 members and after the business of the meeting we all enjoyed our fish and chips. We then taxed our brains with a quiz composed for us by Roy Buchannan.

We are looking forward to the new programme for 2022. In January (27th) we will be having our very own Pat Wright, the subject of her talk yet to be confirmed and then in February (24th) Jan Chojceki will be talking about his grandfather John Quiller Rowett and his connection with Frant/

Also starting in January will be our exercise classes these will be on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month in the Stables.

New members are always welcome we meet in the Stables hall every fourth Thursday in the month so please come along and meet us. Enquiries: Valerie Palmer -01892 750559

Frant School News

We have, sadly, had a significant amount of disruption this term due to Covid 19, with a number of the children and their families testing positive. As I write this today, however, we are almost at 100% attendance. As usual, we have been very busy with the build up to our Christmas celebrations. Our school calendar is full of festive events which we are hoping will go ahead with as few alterations as possible.

Here are a few of our highlights:

» The PTFA bonfire and fireworks were a huge success. Thank you to all of those involved in organising it and to everyone who attended.

» We held Parent consultations virtually in November and these were well attended.

» KS2 enjoyed a fantastic (if wet) trip to Battle Abbey. They are looking forward to welcoming 'Portals to the Past' into school on Monday for an insight into life in the Viking and Saxon times.

» Forest school on Fridays in Lower School has been a huge success. Thank you to the LS team, in particular Mrs Montebello for running this with such enthusiasm, come rain or shine.

» We hosted 2 very well attended Open days for the parents of children hoping to join us in September 2022.

» Children from KS2 sang at the Frant Christmas Fair under the guidance of

Mrs Davey - thank you.

- » Christmas activities have included
- Ice skating in Tunbridge Wells, kindly funded by our ever supportive PTFA
- KS2 Carol Service
- Lower School Nativity
- ABBA themed Weald nativity online
- The Big Sing online
- Christmas lunch served by the staff.
- Christmas shopping in school and
- The school disco!

Our sport continues to go from strength to strength. Eight of our children qualified for a cross country event at Beacon in November. Covid struck, meaning some were unable to participate, but 5 runners qualified for the county finals which is an amazing achievement. Our Year 4 football team also performed very strongly in the Uplands Cluster Football tournament, coming 2nd. Our Year 4 hockey team put in a fantastic performance at the Quicksticks tournament in Wadhurst, winning all 4 of their games. Our aim running through our PE provision is to ensure that all children enjoy keeping active, experience a wide range of activities, do their best, develop a resilience that they can take with them, support others and have fun. Thanks to Mrs Douch, these principles remain at the forefront of our PE. Next year we are on track to the achieve Platinum Level in our Sport Provision. We will keep you updated.

I hope you have enjoyed reading our news. Please do contact the school at any time if you have any questions or would just like to say hello. I am in school every day and will always find time for a chat.

—Mrs Joanna Challis, Head of School

Bayham Old Abbey

News - the Abbey now has a second hand book shop in the Dower House, open and staffed by volunteers every Saturday through February and March 2022, from 11am to 3pm.

At the same time (11-3pm) there will be Short Talks on the history of the site, so a double reason to visit this important heritage. We also welcome contributions of books in a reasonable condition. They can be delivered at the above times.

English Heritage are seeking more volunteers during this winter and into next year, to join our expanding team. Contact volunteer.enquiries@english-heritage.org.uk or visit the English Heritage website.



Frant Village Sign

I'd like to ask you all this question: What do many villages in East Sussex have that Frant hasn't? Answer, a village sign. We are one of the oldest villages in East Sussex and deserve a sign.

Therefore I show here my design for the village green. This sign will be in time for, and to celebrate, Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee.

I have shown the Parish Council this design and their comments were to carry out a petition to see how many local people agree to a sign to celebrate and advertise the lovely village we live in.

A copy of this scheme is in the village shop along with the petition, so please sign so we can return to the council and ask to put the design in front of the planning department to gain approval.

You will notice the design includes Colonel John By and George Smart, our past famous residents, plus the fern which is what Frant means in Anglo Saxon English. I also wanted to place the crown on top, the East Sussex sign at the base and a seat to enable people to sit and view our lovely village green.

If any of you have other ideas for the design then please contact me Peter Payne on 01892 750608.



Happy New Year to all of our readers!

The Parish News team would like to wish all of our readers the very best for 2022. We are very grateful for the continued enthusiastic feedback we receive for each edition which would not be possible without those who contribute articles and of course our delivery team who put the magazines through doors across the Parish. Thank you!

—Carmel Kinley

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**Parish Diary
January/February 2022**

» **1st and 3rd Thursday every month**
Frant Parish Friendship Group,
Older & Active Classes

» **27th January** – Speaker Pat Wright
» **24th February** – Speaker Jan
Chojecki
(see page 8)

» **Saturdays, February-March**
Old Bayham Abbey, Bookshop and talks
(see page 9)

Regular Meetings

Little Fishes: Baby & Toddler Group
Every Tuesday 10–11.30am in The
Stables, Frant. A warm welcome to all.
Encounter (School Years 6–13)
Contact Ed Pascoe for more information:
frant youth@gmail.com

Coffee Morning at The Stables, Frant
Every Wednesday, 10:30am–12noon.
Come for a hot drink, a cake and a chat.
Festival Church Kids During 5pm
outside service.

**Parish News can be downloaded
from: www.frantchurch.org or www.
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**Contributions for our next issue
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Next deadline: 10th February 2022

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Eridge

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Bob Standley: 783579

Parish Council meetings

Full PC meetings are held at 7.30pm
every 3rd Wednesday of the month.
Planning meetings are held on the first
Monday of the month.

MP for Wealden

Nus Ghani MP: nusrat.ghani.mp@
parliament.uk

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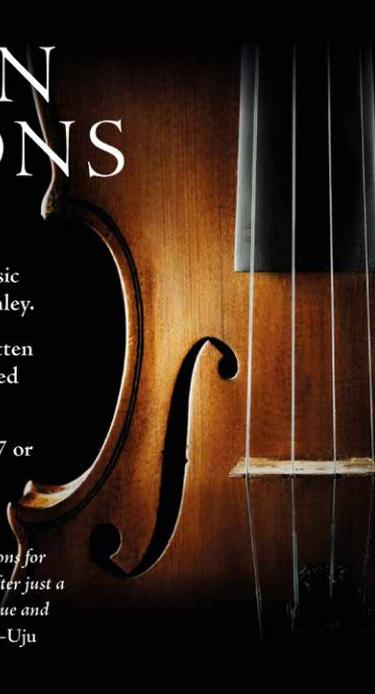
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