



The
Giant

**Brede & Udimore
Parish Magazine**

April 2026

The Giant: the Brede & Udimore Parish Magazine

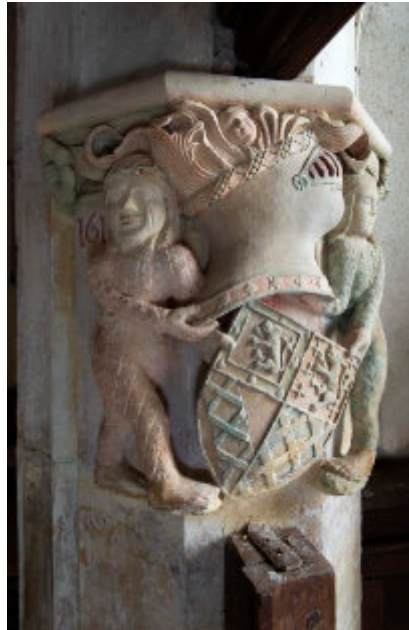
... BUT MORE THAN JUST A PARISH MAGAZINE!

The editorial team consists of Benjamin Barnard, Darryl Bird, John Crook, and Nick Weekes. Contacts: benno.barnard54@gmail.com or john@john-crook.com

We welcome articles on a wide variety of subjects. It must therefore be understood that the views expressed do not necessarily represent those of our two churches. If you disagree with the opinions expressed in an article please approach us. We welcome debate and are happy to publish a rejoinder.

Material for publication must be submitted between the 1st and the 15th of the month prior to publication. Items sent later may not be included.

The Giant Writes: We Tudor noblemen love heraldry, so when thinking about my tomb I ordained that there should be coats of arms featuring my family on all visible sides. But even before that, when designing my chapel I told the masons to put a big capital at the east end of the arch into the chancel featuring my coat of arms and those of my first wife. In those days coats of arms increasingly were held up by supporters—a red dragon and a gold lion for Henry VIII—but living as I do in the Sussex Weald I decided to feature a Wild Woodman and his wife, like those who lurk in the Dell above Brede Place. Clothed in skins they carry my armorial shield. For the crest I chose my helm, and peeping out of the mantling at the top is the couple's baby—he would make a tasty morsel... No! Come on, Goddy, be good!



Front Cover: Sir Thomas Monnington, Stations of the Cross. No. 5, The Cross is laid upon Simon of Cyrene. Photo © Dr John Crook

The Benefice of Brede with Udimore and Beckley and Peasmarsch



Benefice Clergy

We are pleased to announce that the Revd Francesca Reid will be licensed as Rector of Brede with Udimore and Beckley and Peasmarsch at a Eucharistic service in St George's Church, Brede, on Tuesday 19th May 2026 at 7.30 p.m. All are welcome.

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Udimore requires another warden. If you are interested in this role please contact Hugh Pye for further information.

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Holy Week in the Benefice, April 2026

Maundy Thursday 19.00 p.m.	Service at St Mary's Udimore, led by the Rt Revd Bishop Will Hazlewood
Good Friday 12.00 noon	Service at St Peter & St Paul's Peasmarsch, led by the Rt Revd Bishop Will Hazlewood
Holy Saturday 10.30 a.m.	Easter Eggstravaganza at St George's (a fun morning to celebrate Easter for all the family)
Easter Vigil 20.00 p.m.	Congregation led service at St George's
Easter Sunday 9.30 a.m.	Easter Day Eucharist at St George's, celebrated by the Revd Yvonne Adam

April Services at St George's Brede

Sunday 12th 9.30 a.m.	Second Sunday of Easter, celebrated by the Revd Yvonne Adam
Sunday 19th 9.30 p.m.	Third Sunday of Easter, celebrated by the Revd Barry Carter
Sunday 26th 9.30 p.m.	Fourth Sunday of Easter, celebrated by the Revd Yvonne Adam

Each morning at 8 a.m. (except Sundays), a small group gets together for informal worship, which includes singing a hymn. All are welcome to come along and share any thoughts on the readings, and join in quietly praying for those we know who are in need.

Forthcoming Events, St George's Brede

Wednesday 1st 1.30 p.m.–3.00 p.m. **Mothers' Union** (Tea and conversation) at 2 Bellhurst Cottages, Chitcombe Road, Broad Oak. Call Rhiannon on 01424 882037 for more information. All are welcome!

There will be no 4Charities Drop-In this month as the first Friday is Good Friday. The next will be on Friday 1st May, at 10.30 a.m. at Udimore Community Hall. Participation £5: donations gratefully received. To book a seat on the FLEXIBUS if you need transport, please contact Steve Edwards, 01424 882222, or e-mail steve@chitcombe.co.uk

There has been a change in the charities we support. We still support 'Tanzanear', Freedom from Fistula, and FSW. The fourth is 'floating', so if you know of a suitable charity please let Liz Turgoose know on 07808 597689

Dragons, led by Jo Oliver, is a free, fun Sunday school based activity session with singing, craft, a Bible story, and a light discussion around the story to get the children thinking about the meaning behind the stories. Although it's aimed at primary school children, it's open to all kids, both younger and older.

Instead of having Dragons as usual in March we joined the Sunday service at 9.30 a.m. to celebrate Mothering Sunday. Offering posies for all the mums who came along, making bookmarks, colourful pictures and decorating love hearts for the children to give to their mums and delicious warm croissants for everyone to enjoy with jam. We hope everyone who came enjoyed it.

To celebrate Easter, we are holding an Easter Eggstravaganza, on Saturday 4th April between 10 a.m. and 12.30 p.m., with craft stalls, homemade cakes and bakes, competitions for the best Easter Bonnet and decorated cake, crafts for the children to make, planting seeds to take home, and singing from the choir to celebrate this joyous time of year. Most of all, we hope you can join us to help find the dragons hiding in the churchyard, to win one of their eggs—and if you find the giant dragon you win the big prize!

As this is such a fun packed morning, we are holding only this one event in April so there won't be the usual Dragons on the third Sunday in May, Dragons will be on the 10th as I am away on the 17th, so I hope you can join us then instead.

Blessing to you all and wishing you all a very Happy Easter!

Jo Oliver



April Services at St Mary's Udimore

Maundy Thursday, 2nd 7.00 p.m.	Service led by the Rt Revd Bishop Will Hazlewood
Easter Day, 5th 11.15 a.m.	Holy Sunday, celebrated by the Revd Paul Messenger
Low Sunday, 12th 10.00 a.m.	Family Service, led by Lesley Curtis
Sunday 19th 11.15 a.m.	Third Sunday of Easter, celebrated by the Revd Barry Carter
Sunday 26th	No service currently scheduled

THE PARISH OF UDIMORE

St Mary's Community Hall – Classes and Activities

PILATES: Monday to Thursday 9.15–11.15 a.m. (Term time)

Susan Taber: 07858 518504 susantaber66@yahoo.co.uk

ELEVATE YOGA: Flow Yoga suitable for all. Tuesday 7.00–8.00 p.m. (all year round)

Rachael: 07921 854105, elevateyogaclass@googlemail.com

SLOW FLOW TO YIN YOGA: Monday 7–8.15 p.m.

Jo-Jo Hancock: jojo@yogacreative.co.uk

STUDIO JAMIE BALLET: Tuesday 11.00 a.m.

Aysha Jamieson: 01424 883238, studiojamie@icloud.com

VINYASA FLOW: Friday 8.00 a.m.

Jo-Jo Hancock: jojo@yogacreative.co.uk

All classes in term time stop over half-term and school holidays

Enquiries contact Community Hall Booking: udimorehallbooking@gmail.com

St Mary's Community Hall Hire

Our hall, nestling next to the Church, is set amidst apple orchards. It is bright and modern with central heating, a large car park, a well-fitted kitchen, and facilities for the disabled.

Monday – Friday £15.00 per hour (*Events 1 to 6 hours duration*)

Events on Friday may have to finish by 2.00 p.m. if there is a weekend wedding.

Saturday and Sunday £20.00 per hour (*Minimum Booking of 3 hours*)

Bouncy castle use at the hall surcharge: £10 (internal use), (£20 for external use).

One Day and Evening Hire

Sun to Thurs 08.00–23.00 (max 15 hrs) £240.00

Fri and Sat 08.00–23.30 (max 15.5 hrs) £350.00

Hire charges for some events over 6 hours may be negotiable.

Weddings

For information and hire charges email: udimorehallwedding@gmail.com

For all further details and booking, email: udimorehallbooking@gmail.com

Readings for April 2026

Maundy Thursday 2nd April

Exodus 12: 1-4 [5-10], 11-14

Psalm 116: 1, 10-17*

1 Corinthians 11: 23-26

John 13: 1-17, 31b-35

Easter Day 5th April

Acts 10: 34-43 or

Jeremiah 31: 1-6

Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24*

Colossians 3: 1-4 or

Acts 10: 34-43

John 20: 1-18 or

Matthew 28: 1-10

Good Friday 3rd April

Isaiah 52: 13-53.12

Psalm 22*

Hebrews 10: 16-25 or

Hebrews 4: 14-16, 5:7-9

John 18: 1-19, 42

Second Sunday of Easter 12th April

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

Psalm 16

1 Peter 1: 3-9

John 20: 19-31

Third Sunday of Easter 19th April Acts 2: 14a, 36-41
 Psalm 116: 1-3, 10-17*
 1 Peter 1: 17-23
 Luke 24: 13-35

Fourth Sunday of Easter 26th April Acts 2: 42-47
 Psalm 23
 1 Peter 2: 19-25
 John 10: 1-10

Knowing God: The Holy Spirit (he, his)

By Duncan Reid

In previous *Giants* we have looked at God's revelation of himself in external things: in creation, in the Bible, in bread and wine. But when it comes to the Holy Spirit, it's not so much 'out there', it's more 'in here'...or, as I should say, 'he's in here'. For we are told that the Holy Spirit is one of the *persons* of the Trinity, so we tend to refer to him as, well, 'him'. To be fair, some translations occasionally use 'it', which, referring to a person, seems shockingly modern. Why not 'she'??

In both Mark and Matthew's Gospels the Spirit of God is very much associated with Jesus himself, as at his baptism when *he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and alighting on him*. Also, subsequently, there is the account of the temptation of Jesus when *the Spirit led Jesus into the desert*. In Luke, this is expanded somewhat and the Spirit has a major role in the narrative concerned with the incarnation, birth, and early life of Jesus; then, later, during Jesus's ministry, he is evoked in a number of the miracles. And then the story expands in chapter 11, when Jesus admits the possibility of God's giving the Holy Spirit to those who ask him. Later on still, in Acts (which is considered a continuation of Luke's Gospel), there is what might be described as the true coming of the Holy Spirit when, some time after the world-changing events of Easter, the expectant but undoubtedly puzzled disciples are gathered together and they experience *what looked like tongues of fire... and... were all filled with the Holy Spirit*. After that, things really get going for the early Christians.

It is in John's Gospel, however, that we glimpse the Holy Spirit to have so many facets and purposes in God's Kingdom. Besides being experienced as the 'Spirit' or 'Breath' of God, he is also seen as Guide, Comforter, Advocate, Counsellor... the list goes on.

For the early disciples and followers of Jesus, as they first met together and formed bonds, the work of God's Spirit must have often seemed pretty miraculous. For us, many centuries later, people still tell of wondrous interventions from this Person of the Godhead. Maybe, for most of us, most of the time, though, he is a quiet but constant Helper and internal Friend; someone to whom we ought to allow more freedom in our hearts and lives.



The Friends of Beckley Church

have been fortunate to secure the well-known



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Damaris's memorial cross

By John Crook

Readers who have walked around the west end of the church will have noted that the wooden cross commemorating 'Damaris' has been renewed. This was the work of Gary Marriott and is a faithful replica of its predecessor, which had become illegible through weathering.



The Damaris cross before and after replacement.

Until the later twentieth century the brick wall, built in 1769 between the front garden of Church House and the churchyard, extended as far south as Waterworks Lane, and a 1960s photograph in the Revd Percy Hill's *Guide to Brede Church* shows the cross against the wall. A section of the wall then collapsed and was eventually replaced by the present iron fence.



The cross in the 1960s, against the wall of 1769, and its appearance in 2002 after the collapse of part of the wall.

The story of Damaris was popularised by Edmund Austen in his *History of Brede*, who tells how the orphan girl and Lewis Smith, the young heir to Church House, fell in love, and habitually kept tryst either side of the wall. Austen states (without citing his evidence) that they were 'engaged to be married', but that Lewis's parents forbade the nuptials, and that Damaris 'died of a broken heart' in 1856. The Dickensian resonances of this tale need, however, to be re-examined.

Damaris Richardson was born in 1834, the seventh child of Henry Procter Richardson (farmer and parish clerk) and Ann Packham of Appledore, who had married in 1819. Ann died in 1838 at the age of 39 while giving birth to her ninth child; Damaris would have been only four. Her father, however, died in 1850 when Damaris was 16; her older siblings were all boys, so it is perhaps not surprising that she went to live with her 42 year old cousin and his wife. Her 'uncle', as she called him, was Thomas Wakeham Ashburnham Richardson (1796–1876), an eccentric inventor and 'engineer', who had married Jemima Apps of Brede in 1829. Jemima died in 1877 and is buried together with her fifth son, who had died aged 30 the previous year, in a grave next to the Damaris cross. Thomas, Jemima, and their family lived in Stubb Lane, and Damaris paid frequent visits to the nearby Rectory to assist Mrs Maher, the Rector's wife, in running the village school which, according to Austen, included boarders.



Damaris Richardson (top centre), with pupils at the Rectory, next to Mrs Maher, who is wearing a mob cap.

She presumably met Lewis at St George's Church. What has not previously been pointed out is that they were cousins: they shared the same great-grandparents, Henry Richardson (1827–98) and Mary née Sweetlove. Henry and Mary lived in Church House: Henry was a brickmaker, who owned the pottery in Pottery Lane, and was indeed responsible for building the wall either side of which his descendants would meet nearly 90 years later. Henry's eighth child, Susannah, married David Smith in 1788, and it was their son David Jr., by then living in Church House, who forbade their son Lewis from marrying Damaris. It is always said that this was on the grounds of differences of social class—but more probably David hoped that Lewis would find a rich girl who would bring a comfortable dowry to the family.

So Damaris died 'of a broken heart'. In fact, her death certificate gives the cause of death as '*phthisis pulmonalis*—some months', i.e. pulmonary tuberculosis, 'consumption'—like poor Mimi in Puccini's opera. Perhaps without the stress of her situation she might have recovered, stress that may have been exacerbated by the recent death of her brother William at the age of 30: they follow each other in the church burial register.

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BURIALS in the Parish of <u>Brede</u> in the County of <u>Sussex</u> in the Year 1856				
Name.	Abode.	When buried.	Age.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
William Richardson No. 785.	Brede	July 8 th	years 32	Aug ^t Glyward Rector
Damaris Richardson No. 786.	Brede	Sept ^r 4 th	years 22	Aug ^t Glyward Rector

Entries from the church burial register recording the burial of Damaris, preceded by her brother William Richardson. His age is incorrectly given: he was 30.

Damaris was buried on 4 September 1856—it is said, at the exact spot where her clandestine meetings with Lewis took place. The fact that her 'aunt' Jemima and her boy lie in an adjacent marked grave supports this idea.

It seems extraordinary that Damaris's grave was not marked initially. According to Austen one of her former pupils subsequently called at the

Rectory, looked at his old schoolroom, and was then shown Damaris's grave; it was he who ordered the oak cross to be placed there. That cross was subsequently replaced, and the new cross is therefore the third to mark the site.

As for Lewis Smith, he never married and allegedly was sometimes seen wandering sadly near the churchyard. He lived in Church House to the end of his days, dying on 23 February 1896, at the age of 65. He was buried beneath a large table tomb, now very dilapidated and ivy-clad, north of the west end of the church. The inaccessible inscriptions high on the top slab (not recorded in R. A. Longley's useful booklet listing the church's *Monumental Inscriptions*) show that this had first been constructed by his grandfather David (1764–1852), though its first occupant was Lewis's grandmother Susannah (1771–1839). They were followed by his parents, David Jr. (1800–74) and Sarah (1801–79). An additional inscription on the south side commemorates his sister Sarah (died 1878, aged 51). Below Lewis's epitaph on the north side are the words, 'This tomb is now filled'. From it one can just see the location of the Damaris cross.



The tomb containing Lewis Smith's grandparents, parents, and sister, and finally Lewis himself, following his death in 1896.

The Friends of St Mary's, Udimore

Report on talk by Frank Langrish, 21 Feb 2026

The Friends of St Mary's Church, Udimore had a packed house for a talk by Frank Langrish, a local livestock farmer whose family has farmed this area for nearly five generations. Frank gave a marvellously interesting talk centred on his farm round Camber Castle and Pett Level, the history of that area, the wildlife and the birds, how they coped with thistles, the vagaries of the climate, and the intentional inundation by the sea of that area during the war to deter the Germans from landing.

We all had questions and Frank answered many of them. Then it was time for a scrumptious tea with lashings of cake of every description. The ladies and a gentleman of the village surpassed themselves in this respect. £800 was raised: a huge and welcome addition to the funds of the Friends of St Mary's, a small charity whose aim is to raise money for the upkeep of the historic fabric of St Mary's Church, and its churchyard.

You are cordially invited to the Annual General Meeting of The Friends of St Mary's Church Udimore (Registered Charity 292990) on Wednesday 22nd April 2026 at 6.00 p.m. in St Mary's Community Hall. All Welcome.



St George's Brede, 1893

Editors' Note: Brede seems to have been very quiet in April 1926, so there is no '100 Years Ago' feature this month. Owing to constraints of space the next instalment of 'Brede Residents, 75 Years ago' will be published in the May issue.

Marching Song

by Sally Gardner

My Dad went off to fight the war
Left Mum expecting me.
Home for a hug when I was born,
Then—back across the sea.

The beach was full of noise and death;
The rear guard was his post.
He did his duty on that day,
And stayed when all was lost.

From France to Germany they marched:
Dunkirk their Waterloo.
Thousands of bodies left behind,
And Mum thought he'd died, too.

But a boy on a bike brought us wonderful news:
Imprisoned—but still alive!
My mother wept with tears of joy
And waited for peace to arrive.

For five long years she told me tales
About my hero Dad,
As she struggled to buy us food and clothes
With the little money we had.

But he didn't come marching back to us.
He was on a stretcher laid;
'You mustn't go near,' they said to me
'For him there is no aid.'

'Don't touch him! Don't kiss him! You stupid child!
Take her away at once.
Tuberculosis has no cure:
You should know that, you dunce.'

We followed him round the hospitals.
I waited outside the door.
I could hear my Mother telling him
About me, as I sat on the floor.

'So bright and pretty, good as gold,'
She never said that to me.
But I saw her cry, which he never did,
And I learned to let things be.

Too young to go to the funeral,
They left me sitting at home.
'Your Dad is gone,' they said to me,
'Your Mum is on her own.'

'Oh, no, she's not,' a silent shout,
'I'm here—why can't you see?
I don't need a Dad that I've never had,
And all Mum needs is me.'

My Mother just won't talk of him
Her eyes they go all wet,
A widow's pension she is given,
And free school meals I get.

'Turn off that wireless—I just can't bear
The sound of laughter here.'
I'm six years old, and the world is bleak
And full of bitter fear.

A heavy silence fills our house,
Though at night I hear Mum cry,
At school I pretend to have a Dad
Till the Headmaster says: 'Don't lie!'

No teacher ever tells the class,
'Her dad—he died for you'.
He didn't die on the battlefield,
So they won't believe it's true.

I work hard and win a scholarship
To a very classy school,
And suddenly everyone's telling my Mum
That she mustn't be such a fool.

'Good heavens, no! On a widow's pay,
What are you thinking of, dear?
We'll all pretend that she didn't pass;
It's out of her league, we fear.'

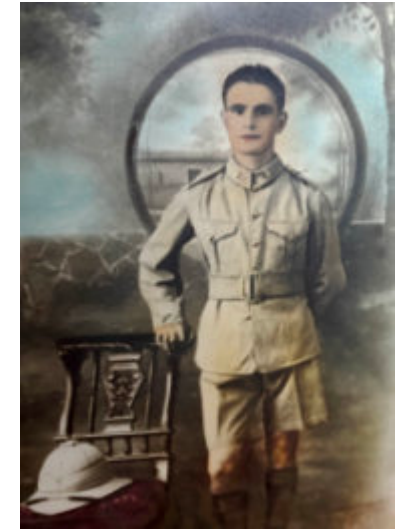
And it nearly worked, Mum, didn't it?
But you thought I'd like to know.
I sometimes think you were proud of me
But you couldn't let it show.

You came from a culture of buttoning up,
Of never saying 'I care'.
And you worked so hard to keep us both,
As there was no Dad to share.

I hated you sometimes, soldier Dad
For leaving us on our own.
The other kids seemed to have it all,
While we battled on alone.

But now I am older than you ever were,
And I hope you can feel my pride
In having a Dad who gave his life
So his daughter could survive.

Sally Patricia Gardner. October 2007



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Eat the Seasons

April – Jersey Royal Potatoes

by Gill Potterton

Potatoes are a constant, year-round staple, popular all around the world. They were first cultivated around six thousand years ago by the Incas in South America, arriving in Britain in the late sixteenth century. They were regarded initially with great mistrust as, like tomatoes and aubergines, they are related to the Deadly Nightshade family. In Britain we eat more potatoes per head than any other European country, but when you buy potatoes, are you aware of the seasonality of the different varieties? Do you know when to look out for the star of the potato calendar (in my opinion), the Jersey Royal?

If you are able to grow your own potatoes in your garden or allotment, you will be more aware of the growing and cropping seasons. You will also know the satisfaction of digging up potatoes that are so fresh that they not only take much less time to cook, but need no scrubbing or peeling, as the skins have not had time to set firm like supermarket potatoes, and are so soft that they can simply be rubbed off before cooking.

Of course you will not be able to grow authentic Jersey Royal potatoes, which appear as early as March or April in the shops, flown over from Jersey which enjoys a rich soil and climate warm enough to allow such an early harvest. These delicate little kidney-shaped new potatoes, with yellow flesh and a distinctive buttery taste, enjoy EU Protection of Designation of Origin, which guarantees that they have been grown in Jersey. Jersey Royals have been grown on the island for over 100 years on steeply sloping fields near the coast, historically ploughed and harvested by hand by a seasonal workforce, the soil being fertilised in the past with local seaweed. At the peak of the season in May, 1,500 tonnes are exported daily, entirely to Britain, the pickers working twelve-hour shifts to ensure the crop reaches the supermarket shelves the next day.

As Jersey Royals do not keep well, it is best to use them quickly; when very fresh, the skin should rub off easily when raw. Never peel them with a knife or peeler, as all the flavour and goodness is just under the skin. The first tiny Royals are best enjoyed served simply with butter or maybe a touch of vinaigrette or herb dressing. These firm, waxy, flavoursome potatoes are ideal for salads, and as the season progresses it is permissible to use the larger, though still precious Jersey Royals in a variety of recipes. It is natural and very rewarding to combine them with other beautiful fresh ingredients at the peak of their seasonality, such as asparagus, watercress, fresh peas and broad beans, rocket and sorrel, wild salmon or trout, and latterly spring lamb or mackerel. Here are some ideas:

- For a warm, fragrant potato salad, always toss the cooked potatoes while they are still hot in your vinaigrette dressing, whether it is made with honey and mustard, lemon juice and chives, or plenty of freshly chopped vibrant green watercress. Cover and leave until just warm and the potatoes will absorb all the wonderful flavours.
- For a more piquant salad which would serve well with oily fish such as salmon or mackerel, add finely chopped red onion, chopped capers and fresh dill to your vinaigrette.
- Warm Jersey Royals can be tossed together with baby spinach leaves and flaked smoked trout, drizzled with lemon juice and served with a dollop of pesto for a simple starter or lunchtime salad.
- It is possible to use cooked Jersey Royals in a Tortilla or Spanish omelette. Slice them thickly, then fry gently in a large pan with thinly sliced onion, which should soften but not colour. Add the beaten eggs and a combination of blanched asparagus, peas or broad beans. This thick, wholesome omelette can be cut into wedges and served hot or cold. Alternatively, add smoked salmon and rocket to the Jersey Royals for another colourful Tortilla.
- A truly Mediterranean dish can be made by tossing warm Jersey Royals, together with roasted peppers, in a dressing made from tomato purée and lemon juice. When cool, add feta cheese, olives and basil.



Out and About

by Gary Marriott

March has enjoyed himself: warm to cold, wet to dry, coats on to coats off, but the birds are singing a different song, sometimes late into dusk, and there are flittings and chasings around the hedges and exploring of last year's nesting sites; all these positive signs of life and hope nudging us to look forward. In the garden we have enjoyed the daffodils; now the primroses are making a show, and—a first for me—the snake's head fritillaries.

Standing on the up platform of Robertsbridge Station there is a rare sight to behold, that of a bank full of purple periwinkle in full bloom—and what a splendid show it is. Ross has enabled the station to become an attractive, warm, and welcoming part of all our journeys. On the lawn near to the road by the ticket office, there is a garden seat by a host of hyacinths in bloom. I hope people take the time to sit a few moments to enjoy them.

The journey to London is marked out by the clouds of blackthorn blossom on the embankments and along the field edges. Despite its association with British folklore, I always think of blackthorn as an Easter shrub, with its dark dense branches and thorns, along which appear clusters of delicate blossoms. You sometimes notice small birds sitting in amongst them enjoying the scent. Yet for Easter, the symbolism of the dark, hard branches and painful thorns cannot be missed; and then, before the leaves appear, the beauty and innocence of the white blossom. It is almost a visual poem.

On to Paddington Station, where there was a bitterly cold, harsh wind making people walk head down very quickly for their destination. If they looked up they would have seen a line of fairly newly planted beautiful magnolia trees in full bloom. How they survive in that harsh environment I can't imagine.

Paddington Station is an eye opener if you enjoy architecture. The Grade I listed Train Shed, built in the 1850s, is a feast of wrought iron and glass. It was designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, who had been greatly influenced by the design of the Crystal Palace, built for the 1851 Great Exhibition. It consists of a three-span arched roof which, when built, was the biggest in the world. These spans are crossed by two transepts, all overlooked by three oriel windows. It was these windows that caught my eye as there is something eastern about them and they make their mark to this day.

Worcester is a significant city. Not only does it have a very beautiful cathedral, but it contains a remarkable quantity of good quality Georgian, Edwardian, and Victorian buildings and squares, as well as a 65-arch railway

viaduct. While enjoying these treasures, I couldn't help reflecting how devastated I, and maybe the population in general, would feel, if these gems were obliterated. I and many others love the beauty and character of the built environment; it has enriched and marked my life in so many ways as I am sure it does for us all. To wipe it away would be like tearing out a large part of my soul, my identity. This horror is being played out in our world now. We have all seen the horrific photographs of miles and miles of rubble. That rubble was perhaps to others what a simple railway arch is to me. I cannot imagine how I would build my life again after such an event. Let us hope and pray for a world where vengeance will not be allowed to run riot and that the innocent, who are affected in such a way, will be healed.



Paddington Station, the Train Shed. © Network Rail Media Centre



A quick loop round central Moscow before breakfast

by Philip Marriott

Starting with the red walls of the Kremlin behind you and looking north, go across the square and park in front, transformed in recent years into a partly raised platform with garden areas cunningly concealing an underground shopping centre, and you find yourself at the bottom of Tverskaya Street: the road to Tver. It is Moscow's Oxford Street and Charing Cross Road in one. We could walk on but instead we'll veer to the right and walk in front of the State Duma building: the Russian parliament. Carry on and you'll quickly find the Bolshoi Ballet on your left. But, and not unexpectedly, you have to move past the bust of Karl Marx to get there. He occupies the prime position in the square in front of the Ballet with its collection of fountains. Just behind it they often put up temporary exhibition stands, with features on the dancers for example. To the right is the 'little' theatre paired together with its 'big sister'. It stages plays as opposed to opera and ballet. The Bolshoi has been refurbished within the last twenty years and is now the centre of what you might call a small town devoted to the dancers and others who work there; they have their own medical clinic for example. It's all unobtrusive though. You could be right in front and not know its purpose.

Walk around the clinic to its other side and across the road you find the 'hall of columns', the favourite spot for trade union congresses of the Soviet era. Keep going north only a matter of yards and you reach Kamergersky *Pereulok* (side street), Lara's home in *Dr Zhivago*. This runs parallel to the long State Duma building. It's also the site of the Prokofiev apartment museum above a café. His statue stands at the far end of the street. If we go past him and cross Tverskaya *Ulitza* (street), the first thing we may have seen would be McDonalds, and although now re-branded, I am told it is visually much the same. Go right and take the next left here and we find one of the more charming quieter side streets which is where you'll find St Matthew's Anglican church of Moscow. Go past this and you'll soon find yourself in front of The Moscow Conservatory, the venue of many historic concerts, containing a large painting of various composers together – Chopin and Rimski-Korsakov in his navy uniform among others.

We turn left here and go straight on to take us back to the Kremlin in about ten minutes. To get back to our starting point we cross the area known as The *Manezh*, a large covered training ground for horses from shortly after the Napoleonic era. After much talk of redevelopment in the late '90s this was the scene of the infamous and mysterious but very convenient fire allowing the building of an underground car park in the rebuilding after the blaze. It now hosts exhibitions.

Having completed our loop, let's refresh ourselves with *blini s ikroi* (pancakes with caviar), *seerniki* (cottage cheese rolls is not an exact translation) and maybe a glass of *kvass* (slightly fermented water).



The Bolshoi Theatre, November 1997. © Dr John Crook



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Wren

by Stephen Wrigley

Small bird. Your coin has disappeared
Yet you remain. Once, your profile
Figured sometime-minted change
In someone's palm, scarce enough
To buy anything. That token
Of another age must have bemused
Its children – first, a goddess glinted,
Then up popped a pert device.



Now, you quick-flit on a low stone wall,
Pause, hide, tail tilted in your search
For insects, seeds, the copper farthing
Flipped – unseen, seen – a matinee
Performance for a young spring day.

Easter

by Liz Miles

The end was complete when the story began,
Star too bright to see but its glow was made man.
From wholeness he fell to the depths of the night,
Yet the world knew him not as it put out the light.
His sentence was given: to conquer all time,
As they fed off his flesh, and drank bloody wine
That flowed from his veins, offered freely, in pain,
Creeping steadily downwards, rich red the stain.
It spread to the earth to seep through the ground
Past rocks and the thorns that leapt up around.
Twenty centuries passed, and still human cries
Tell that glimmers of light have been seen through the lies.

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The advertisement includes a circular portrait of a woman, the Pushing up Daisyz logo (hands holding a daisy), and the Society of Will Writers logo (scales of justice).

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Doing my duty to God and the Queen

by Mike Bone

Ex-scouters will remember the words as one held the Troop flag whilst making the promise and three-finger salute with the right hand.

Way back, in the early 50s, I had just taken over as assistant scoutmaster of a troop in Kenton, Middlesex. Mine was the full Baden-Powell kit: the wide brimmed Canadian Mounties style hat, shorts like those of certain officials in topical climes, with an ample fit to keep the upper legs cool, and with creases like flags sticking out, khaki, like the badge-laden shirt, and socks with green garter tabs, and a proudly worn set of shoulder tabs declaring my status as an ASC.

I donned the above attire one evening in early November on my way from my digs in Harrow to run a troop night meeting at St Mary's, Kenton. I was a little late and cycled off with my saddlebag full and my hat held in place with a chin-strap.

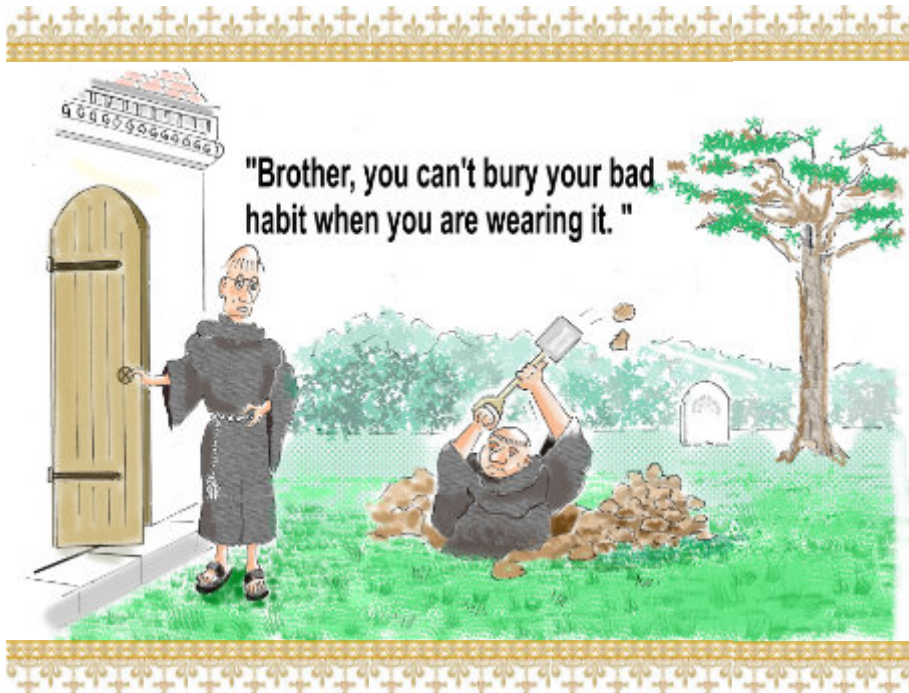
Full of youthful rectitude and plans for the evening I passed along Gayton Road by Harrow County School for Boys (as it was then known), and as I did so I ignored a small plume of smoke rising through a crack in the pavement, close to the school railings. But a second thought prompted me to stop, ride back, and take a closer look.

The smoke plume was undeniable, but there didn't seem to be a fire. However, it might be the result of an electrical fault—and if it became any bigger it would provide some diversion for the troop later. I had propped my bike against the railings and this had attracted some of the boys who were playing in the school grounds.

I was greeted with mixed queries and suggestions from the lads, some of whom were of an age when shorts had been proudly discarded for standard grey flannels; they greeted me with comments such as 'We like your shorts', 'Are you still in the scouts, mister?' and 'Can we do a bob-a-job, mate?'

On my suggestion I was eventually escorted to the school office telephone, where I made my first 999 call—the fire brigade was called and despite my playing down the severity of the emergency (against a background of encouragement mixed with 'It ain't anything, mate'), I gave directions and was told to stand by; this I duly did and I was joined by an increasing number of schoolboys behind the fence.

A short time later the bell of an appliance was heard and very soon it appeared and then passed by me... despite my waving at the crew and the cheers of the gathered boys. 'Hard luck, mate,' I heard.



Cartoon by Mike Bone

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What I hadn't seen, but the appliance crew had, was a large cloud of smoke rising a hundred yards further along the road.

I quickly got back on my bike and rode down to where the appliance had stopped—this to cries of 'Go and get them, mate!'

The crew were about to roll out the hoses to attend to a bonfire of leaves that an elderly lady had lit. The duty officer, upon realising I was not some nosy scoutmaster just passing by, agreed to return to 'my fire', meanwhile explaining that he thought I had just been waving to a passing fire engine. I don't believe the elderly lady was any less confused when she learnt that I had called the fire brigade, but not because of her bonfire.

The return to the school and the anxiously awaiting boys was naturally and predictably an anticlimax; my smoke plume had fizzled out. The boys were joyfully and expectantly distracted by the fire crews entering the grounds near the fence line to dig around, only to discover a smouldering rocket from the Bonfire Night celebrations the day before...

'You did the right thing, sir,' was the duty officer's parting remark to a still uniformed and hatted scoutmaster (I think he said 'sir').

Did I do my duty? And was I really prepared? (Should I have told the fire services I was standing by dressed in my uniform?).

It was probably all quite entertaining for those schoolboys, but embarrassment precluded a change of my plans, and at the troop meeting we just played a game of good old British Bulldog.



The author at Scout Camp on Guernsey, 1950s

Trip to Ukraine 2026

by Kaye Colyer

How to Make a Simple Trench Candle:

Prepare the Tin: Clean an empty metal tin (eg, food or paint can).

Add Cardboard: Cut corrugated cardboard into strips, roll them tightly, and place them into the tin, ensuring they are slightly higher than the rim.

Pour Wax: Melt candle wax, paraffin, or a mixture of both, and pour it into the tin to saturate the cardboard.

Cool: Allow the wax to harden completely before lighting.

These candles are widely produced by volunteers to send to the frontline for warmth in winter, making them a crucial, low-cost tool for survival.

A huge thank you for the donation of candles from St George's Church, Brede, which I boxed up and took to Ukraine. My partner and I purchased an ambulance a few months ago and travelled to Ukraine as part of a large 21-vehicle convoy a few weeks ago. Forty like-minded people from USA, Romania, Portugal, UK, and Ireland converged early one Monday morning at Dover docks. We had only been introduced via Teams, so it was wonderful finally to meet everyone in person.



From Dover went on to Antwerp, Madgesburg, Gliwice, Krasieczyn, and to the border crossing into Ukraine at Medyka. Once we were close to Kraków we all turned off our Google Maps sharing and our family were told there



would be no further communication from us until we were all safely out of Ukraine. It is quite well known that Russian supporters scan the airwaves and being a large convoy, we didn't want to draw attention to ourselves.

En route we met a convoy of six ambulances from Germany travelling to Ukraine and exchanged 'badges' and mutual respect. I had the pleasure of driving two other ambulances and a pick-up truck on the various legs of the convoy. My partner and I were reunited for the border crossing, and I drove our ambulance the last leg into Lviv, very icy, and bitterly cold with snow everywhere.

We stopped off at the charity's large property which is being converted to house displaced women and children from villages on the frontline. The vacant, empty faces of the women who have lost everything, and many now without husbands and sons, will haunt me forever. Their courage and resilience is phenomenal and I found it humbling.

The charity is also working to reunite families, so they can live together and learn how to once again be a family. When a husband returns from the frontline minus limb(s) and traumatised, everyone is affected. The statistic is 80% of families split because the changes are too hard to cope with. So, the charity offers PTSD counselling, medical assistance and equipment to make life easier.



We spent two nights in Lviv, a breathtakingly beautiful medieval city, founded in the 5th/6th centuries, and which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Despite the war, life goes on, the cafes are open and people are still working: they work to fund the war in the east, and, in defiance they will not let Russia destabilise the country.

We walked around the historic old town and visited a Catholic church, now the Garrison Church of St Peter and St Paul. In the church there were boards with hundreds of photographs of men and women, the fallen. We walked in silence and were all visibly upset. The church was setting up for nine military funerals that day; the most in any one day was seventeen. Flowers were everywhere and sadness descended the church like a veil. Even now, hundreds of miles away, safe in the UK, the memory brings tears to my eyes.

Before entering Ukraine we were all told to download the *Air Raid* app and activate it for the area of Lviv. In the early hours, my phone awoke us with a siren and instructions to go to the nearest air raid shelter, which for us was the basement of the hotel. We heard the air raid sirens going off in the city as we made our way to the basement, where we stayed for the rest of the night.

In the morning, we found out that the whole of Ukraine was on missile and drone alert, and not more than a mile away from our hotel there were two terrorist explosions, injuring 25 and killing a young policewoman aged 23. How that mother wakes every morning with a broken heart and carries on with her life I just cannot comprehend.

At 8.50 a.m. we all stood outside the hotel. Every morning at exactly 9.00 a.m. (Kyiv time), Ukraine observes a nationwide moment of silence to honour fallen soldiers, civilians, and children killed in the Russian invasion. This daily tribute, sometimes marked by radio, TV, or street announcements, causes public life to pause, with pedestrians, drivers, and workers stopping to pay respect. Everyone—and I mean everyone—stopped in their tracks. Vehicles halted, activated their hazard warning lights, and drivers exited their vehicles, observing a moment of silence. The loud ticking clock denoted the passing of one minute, ending with *Slava Ukraini*.

That morning, we officially handed over all 21 vehicles to the charity. My partner and I left to go back to Poland along with many other volunteers and flights back to Gatwick. A few stayed and the next day took the vehicles to Kyiv along with Ukrainian volunteers. Two were firefighters from Kyiv, who took two 4x4's to assist in the evacuation of civilians from frontline villages.

We met two amazing British nurses, both returning to help the Ukrainians having come home to work, save and fundraise for more medical supplies. We said our tearful goodbyes, 'best wishes', and 'stay safe', because we knew they were going deep into Ukraine close to the frontline, saving limbs and lives.

There but the grace of God go we, living in a country last invaded in 1066. I'm 64, and found the week the most important week of my life so far. I came back feeling empty and wondering how I can ever return to the person I once was a week ago. I cannot. I feel even more compelled to help this nation, and, yes, I will go back. I'm already making plans.



Shiite Theology

by Blake Larkin

January 2020. I still remember fondly the assassination of Qasem Soleimani. Together with his thugs, he had been at the head of an operation which cracked down on student protests across the metropolitans of Iran. In total, that previous month before he met his end, Tehran boasted that around 1,500 individuals had gasped their last breath on the firing line following a wave of protests that November. Back then, a more cautious Donald Trump was seeking to make headlines for what was set to be one of the most contested Presidential elections in generations.

Fast-forward to today, and the 'America First' president seems to have the most ambitious foreign policy since the Bush days; however, on the back of a divided homefront, with *Washington Post* reporting a majority against action and even the very conservative *Fox News* commenting that it has divided the nation down the middle. The war has led Zohran Mamdani, Mayor of New York City, to announce on X that this was a 'catastrophic escalation in an illegal war of aggression'. Irony on so many levels, with the most apparent being that, of course, Iran champions itself on Human Rights and respecting international laws; most strikingly of course in funding their 'peace-keeping' activities amongst those nice men that go by the name of Hezbollah and Hamas. As I write, *Iran International*, a London based satellite and digital news outlet, reports that the regime has called citizens to flood the streets during the strikes to create human shields at strategic infrastructure. How lovely. Oh, and didn't Khamenei once tweet that 'women are like flowers'? The last time I mandatorily veiled my plants, they withered in weeks—freedom needs sunlight.

In this entire unfolding, one thing has become starkly clear, citizens both in the US and the UK are in the dark on the entire issue. Soleimani's slaughter was a habitual event within the Islamic Republic's history. As estimated, between 1981 and 1985, 7,900 to 9,500 people were executed, depending on which historian you quote. The reality is that ummahs and Ayatollahs owe their power to a Shiite form of Islamism, where the highest reward in life is martyrdom in battle against the infidel. In Arabic, the language of the Quran, 'victim' in the sense of anyone who is harmed by another (*dahiyya*) has very close etymological association to the word *udhiyya* meaning a subject offered as sacrifice. The most prominent formulation of this victimhood narrative is in the Iranian regime's open glorification and support for their *shahid(a)* ('witnesses'), meaning martyr. A regime which sees its citizens as sacrificial lambs for theocratic merit and fervour is for me, alone, a legitimate reason for war. Add to this, their recent

ambition to develop long-range missile systems, and it becomes a no-brainer. Offensive action is crucial for our own national security.

What is incredible, when speaking to Iranian refugees here, is that they don't want the bombing to stop. Unsurprisingly, the more left-wing a British citizen is, the more likely they strongly oppose the current war (*YouGov*). I, for one, am pleased action is finally being taken. Yet, like an absurd adult believing in Santa Claus, our government remains adamant in applying 'international law' to a regime at odds with the very ontology of that term.



Help! I feel threatened!

Brede and Udimore Luncheon Club

At our well attended Lunch in February, we enjoyed a traditional meal of fish and chips, and a delicious dessert of apple crumble with custard. Our thanks and compliments to the chefs, Tracey and Bradley, and to Helen and Tash at Front of House; your hard work and excellent service were very much appreciated!

The Lunch Club meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 12.30 p.m. at the Red Lion. Next Lunch, Tuesday 28th April.

For information about the Club please contact me on 01424 882007

Frances Parnham (Membership Secretary)

Brede Women's Institute

We welcomed David Allen, a professional speaker and storyteller, to our Open Meeting in March, to tell the tales of 'Lady Poisoners of Victorian England'. Straightway, David addressed his audience. Holding a glass of water in one hand and a phial-shaped sachet in the other, he slowly tipped the contents into the liquid saying, 'Arsenic: colourless, odourless, tasteless, purchase 6d a packet.' David explained that arsenic was the most popular poison powder in Victorian England and easily obtainable. He then went on to narrate his first murder story.

It concerned Madeline Hamilton Smith, an Academy educated young lady living in Glasgow in 1897. She had a long lasting affair with Emile, a humble clerk and she wrote many passionate letters to him during their relationship. Pressured by her father to marry a family friend, Madeline ended the affair and asked for her letters to be returned. Emile refused and threatened to show them to her family. In desperation, she decided to poison him by giving him cocoa laced with arsenic. It took her three attempts! Madeline was eventually tried for murder but the final verdict was, 'Not Proven'.

The second murder we heard about was committed by Christiana Edmunds, who lived in Brighton in 1869. She fell in love with a local physician, Dr Beard, a married man. When he decided to end the affair, Christiana blamed his wife for the break up and decided to poison her with strychnine. She sent some chocolates injected with the poison to the doctor's wife, who became ill but didn't die. A child who helped her deliver other chocolates, ate one and died. Known as 'The Chocolate Cream Poisoner', Christiana was tried, declared insane, and sent to Broadmoor.

During the dramatic telling of these true tales, David was ably assisted by two of our gentlemen visitors in the audience. Needless to say he received loud applause.

Joy Wild thanked David for a very entertaining afternoon. The competition: 'A Victorian Item', was won by Marion Brunt.

Next month is our Birthday Meeting, which will take place on Wednesday 8th April at 2.00 p.m. in Brede Village Hall. Battle Ukulele Group will be entertaining us. The Competition is 'Something Sparkly'.

For information about Brede WI, please contact Sue Orchard (Joint President) on 07305 693745

Frances Parnham

News from Trinity Methodist Church, Broad Oak

Church Services. We meet for worship every Sunday at 10.30 a.m. When there is a fifth Sunday in the month, an informal Service is held in the Hall at 3.30 p.m. All are welcome to join us and stay for refreshments after the Services.

Community. This April, we are starting our new 'Wednesday Welcome' afternoon, between 2.00 and 4.00 p.m. Join us for a rolling programme of discussions, crafts and activities, followed by plenty of time to chat and relax over tea and cake. Or, just drop by for Book Swap: a warm welcome awaits you.

David Swales, our Community Lay Worker, continues his regular visits to Roselands Care Home and is always made very welcome. Recently, a new Activities Coordinator has joined the staff, and plans are now being made for a Sing-Along with the residents in the Spring.

Leading up to Easter, and under the leadership of David, two classes from Brede Primary School visited the Church and its grounds for lessons and activities about Easter and springtime. And, at the end of March, there will be a whole school Assembly in the Church. After school that day, the children and family members are invited back to join us for an Easter trail outside and indoor Easter crafts and refreshments!

For further information about Trinity Methodist Church, Broad Oak, please visit our website: www.trinitybroad oak.org.uk

Frances Parnham

Brede Friendly Circle

We are 65 this year and later on in the year we will celebrate!

Last month on Wednesday 18th March we went to Lyme Wharf Café, just outside Northiam, where as usual, over our coffee or hot chocolate and whatever we chose to eat, we put the world to rights. Not that anyone heeds us, so I often wonder why we do it...



On Wednesday 15th April we shall be at the Hawkhurst Fish Farm Cafe. We always leave the Village about 10 a.m. to be at our destination at 10.30 a.m. We leave for our return at 12 noon.

Our group goes out for coffee at various locations in the wider area. The drive is never longer than 15 miles. We have a few drivers who can offer transport to those who require it.

The group is all about fun and friendship, and if you feel that this is something you might enjoy please contact our membership secretary, Carol, on 01424 883262

Rhiannon Oliver

Brede Mothers' Union



Last month we did not meet on the Wednesday as we went to the District meeting in Bexhill. It is Mothers' Union's 150th Birthday this year and there is going to be a big celebration in St Paul's Cathedral in June. I will be there with many others from the District.

It was decided at the meeting that we would have a District MU picnic again this year. It will be held at Polegate on Saturday 18th June. It is rather lovely as branch members are invited, and it will be a chance for everyone to be acquainted again, as many meet at the spring and autumn meetings in Brighton. Mary Sumner Day on 9th August will possibly be at St Mary's in Rye, where the Banners of each Branch will be paraded before and after the service, which is an impressive sight.

We have a Branch meeting on Wednesday 1st April in Brede Church Room at 1.30 p.m. Please feel invited to join our worldwide organisation: it's worth a try!

Rhiannon Oliver (Branch Leader & Bexhill District MU Chairman)

Brede Design with Flowers



In March we celebrated St Patrick's day by depicting the Irish Flag with flowers and foliage. You can admire our parallel design in the picture!

On Monday 13th April we will be doing a spring design. Our get-together will be at 2 Bellhurst Cottages at 7.00 p.m. As you can see the designs are not as difficult as you would imagine. We have a fun evening, finishing off with tea or coffee and a chat. If you feel you would like a go, come along. Please phone me if you want to know more: 01424 882037

Rhiannon Oliver

National Trust Rye & District Association | Monthly Flyer

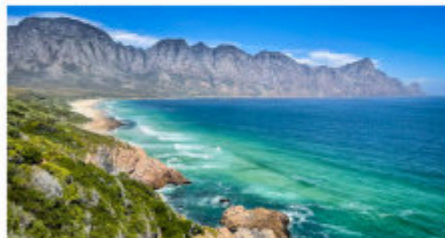
We offer a range of enjoyable events each month to members and non-members of our association in support of The National Trust.

Walks September-June | Talks September-June

Our 5 mile circular walks cost £3 and begin at 10.00am. All walks end with a rewarding pub lunch and a quiz. Our talks with popular guest speakers cover a range of topics and are held from 2.00pm at Brede Village Hall, and cost £5 for members/£10 for non-members – including refreshments.



Talk | South Africa's Garden Route Thursday 16 April



'Not Just Safaris – The Beauty of South Africa's Garden Route' Using personal experience and images, Sue Flipping takes us on a trip through South Africa's Garden Route – from green winelands and huge ostrich farms to caves deep underground and glorious hills. Exploring aspects of 21st century culture, finding out why South Africans are so proud of their fynbos.

Spring Lunch | Flackley Ash Hotel Saturday 9 May 12.30pm



This year we return to the **Flackley Ash Hotel**. A charming privately owned Georgian Country House Hotel set in 5 acres of mature gardens. There is a three course menu, for a special price of £39.50 pp (including coffee, mints and gratuities). A wonderful opportunity for us all to get together and enjoy good food and conversation.

Outing | Penshurst Place Tuesday 15 September



Penshurst Place is the birthplace of Sir Philip Sidney who is remembered as one of the most prominent figures of the Elizabethan age. The medieval house is one of the best surviving examples of 14th-century domestic architecture. Price is £49.00 pp which includes a guided tour of the house on arrival, and a free afternoon to look around the walled gardens.

SOME FUTURE EVENTS TO ADD TO YOUR DIARY: Walk: **The Bull Inn, Rolvenden** Tuesday 14th April | **Annual Fun Golf Day, Tenterden Golf Club** Friday 11th September.

Contact: Dee Williams (membership) 07760 115413 membershipryenationaltrust@gmail.com
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Rear cover by Graham Johnson

Old Sussex words ^{for mud}
 &
 their modern translations



Clodgy

wet mud, like a field path
 after rain



Pug

sticky, yellow clay



Sleech

thin, river mud



Gawn

sticky,
 foul-smelling mud