



The Giant

**Brede & Udimore
Parish Magazine**

August 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, or have any other criticisms, 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.



'Giant's Blood' oozing from the banks of the Forge Stream.

The Giant Writes: In the June issue of your magazine I mentioned strange goings-on at Groaning Bridge. This is where legend has it that I died by being cut in two by the children of Sussex and Kent, each team on either end of a big wood saw: the peasants round here talk of a 'wooden saw' which is obviously a corruption. They also point out the 'Giant's Blood' to support their nonsense: the 'blood' is of course a hydroxide of iron (a form of rust) from the clay ironstone nodules that are found in the Wealden deposits in this area. The 'blood' is not apparent at Groaning Bridge at present, but can be seen, for example, in the banks of the Forge Stream.

Cover Image by Darryl Bird: Festival of Flowers

'The Rector's Reflections'

Plants, Herbs, and Gardens

For my birthday recently my Aunt gave me a 'Biblical Herbs Growbar' which was very exciting, although unfortunately I tend to be much better at killing plants than I am at growing them. I approach planting this Growbar with slight trepidation, as I feel killing off a load of Biblical Herbs wouldn't be a great look for the rector. This month we are also looking forward to the Brede Flower Festival, as well as the Beckley Church Fête, both over the August Bank Holiday long weekend. Plannings and preparations are happening in abundance, and I don't know if any of my Biblical Herbs would grow in time or successfully enough to make an appearance.

However, all this got me thinking about the role of plants, herbs and gardens in the Bible. I'm sure a lot of research has been done about this, and you could go into a deep rabbit hole of herb and plant references and their particular symbolisms, but a particular occasion springs out to me. Of course, one of Jesus' famous comments about plants is in the Sermon on the Mount: 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow' (Matthew 6:28). He is teaching a lesson, encouraging us to look to how God tends the natural world, to look how God so 'clothes' and grows the flowers, and as such will grow and tend to us as well. The growth and blossoming of flowers is entirely in God's hands. We cannot do anything to open a blossom, put fragrance into a flower, or unfurl the leaves: if we tried (and I certainly did as a child), we might well end up pulling out leaves and tearing petals—it is beyond our power. The growth and blossoming of flowers and plants are in God's hands, and so it is with us and our own lives.

God Bless, Fran



The Benefice of Brede with Udimore and Beckley and Peasmarsh



Benefice Clergy

RECTOR

The Revd Francesca Reid
The Rectory, Brede Hill
BREDE TN31 6HG (07510 234890)
revfrancescareid@gmail.com

LAY READER

Mrs Lesley Curtis
Fairlight View, Udimore Road
UDIMORE TN31 6BG (07506 780044)

RETIRED CLERGY

The Revd Dr Bill Dolman
Little Belhurst Cottage, Hobbs Lane
BECKLEY TN31 6TT (01797 260203)

Church Officers

ST GEORGE'S BREDE www.stgeorgesbrede.org.uk

CHURCHWARDEN

Mr David Oliver
2 Bellhurst Cottages, Chitcombe Road
BROAD OAK TN31 6EU
davidoliver489@gmail.com
07792 517614 / 07900 300587

CHURCHWARDEN & ORGANIST

Mr Duncan Reid
Perryfield, Stubb Lane
BREDE TN31 6EH
duncandgary@yahoo.co.uk
01424 882412



TREASURER

Mr Steve Edwards
treasurer@stgeorgesbrede.org.uk or 07702 173839

CAPTAIN OF BELLRINGERS

Mr Colin Mitchell
Contact via the Secretary : Mrs Wendy Burchett
wendyhayler@outlook.com or 01424 882727

ST MARY'S UDIMORE www.stmarysudimore.org

CHURCHWARDEN

Mr Hugh Pye
hughpye@hotmail.com or 07484 709316

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

TREASURER

Mr Harry Curtis
(Honorary Treasurer)
Fairlight View, Udimore Road
UDIMORE TN31 6BG
harry@ecooffice.tax
07572 878858



August Services at St George's Brede

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Sunday 2nd 10.00 a.m. | Benefice Eucharist at Udimore, celebrated by the Revd Bill Dolman |
| Sunday 9th 9.30 a.m. | Parish Eucharist, celebrated by the Revd Francesca Reid |
| Sunday 16th 9.30 a.m. | Parish Eucharist, celebrated by the Revd Bill Dolman |
| Sunday 23rd 9.30 a.m. | Parish Eucharist with baptism, celebrated by the Revd Francesca Reid |
| Sunday 30th 9.30 a.m. | Flower Festival Benefice Eucharist, celebrated by the Revd Francesca Reid |

Each morning at 8 a.m. (except Sunday), a small group holds a short, informal service of prayer, readings, and 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

Little Giants, Baby & Toddlers Play Group, and **Dragons**, Sunday School, are on hold until further notice.

Flower Festival – August Bank Holiday 2026

As the Brede Flower Festival approaches at the end of August, we are putting out a plea to everyone:

We are looking for the following donations:

- Jams and Preserves. Labels will be provided for the jar. Please contact Judy on 07540 073299
- Good quality books for Gary's Book stall, novels especially. Please contact Gary on 01424 882412
- Cakes: larger ones to slice for refreshments and smaller ones (6") to sell whole at the cake stall. Bakes, slices and cupcakes too, we love a variety as well as the traditional favourites! Please contact Jo on 07946 513983
- Good quality bric-a-brac, including toys, for Granny's Attic. Please contact Louise on 07791 383323 to arrange dropping off items. Plants of any variety (but labelled if possible) for the plant stall. Please contact David Oliver on 07792 517614

If all donations could be held back until Saturday 15th August, please, we would be most grateful. The cakes and plants must be brought on the Friday or Saturday of the Bank Holiday weekend (29th–31st August).

We are also looking for local businesses to sponsor the event. If you are interested in sponsoring our Flower Festival, please contact Stephen Edwards on 07702 173839 or treasurer@stgeorgesbrede.org.uk

As we said last month, we need lots of volunteers across the weekend as well as before and after, so if you are free to help, please contact us on 07946 513983 or st.georges_brede@outlook.com

Thank you so much in advance for your support and contributions; we are extremely grateful!

The Team at St Georges Church Brede

August Services at St Mary's Udimore

Sunday 2nd 10.00 a.m.	Benefice Eucharist, celebrated by the Revd Bill Dolman
Sunday 9th 10.00 a.m.	Family Service, led by Lesley Curtis
Sunday 16th 11.15 a.m.	Parish Eucharist, celebrated by the Revd Bill Dolman
Sunday 23rd 11.15 a.m.	Parish Eucharist, celebrated by the Revd Francesca Reid
Sunday 30th 9.30 a.m.	Flower Festival Benefice Eucharist at St George's Brede, celebrated by the Revd Francesca Reid

Forthcoming Events at St Mary's Udimore

Friday 7th Aug 10.30-12.00	4Charities Coffee Morning. Hall
Friday 4th Sept 10.30-12.00	4Charities Summer Lunch, Hall
Sunday 6th Sept 10.00 a.m.	Benefice Service St Peter & St Paul, Peasmarch
Sunday 6th Sept 10.30 a.m.	Pet Service. Hall TBC

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 7.00–8.15 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 August 2026

Sunday 2 August

Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Genesis 32: 22–31

Psalms 17: 1–7, 16

Romans 9: 1–5

Matthew 14: 13–21

Sunday 16 August

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

Genesis 45: 1–15

Psalms 133

Romans 12: 1–8

Matthew 15: (10–20) 21–28

Sunday 30 August

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Exodus 3: 1–15

Psalms 105: 1–6, 23–26, 45b*

Romans 12: 9–21

Matthew 16: 21–28

Sunday 9 August

Tenth Sunday after Trinity

Genesis 37: 1–4, 12–28

Psalms 105: 1–6, 16–22

Romans 10: 5–15

Matthew 14: 22–33

Sunday 23 August

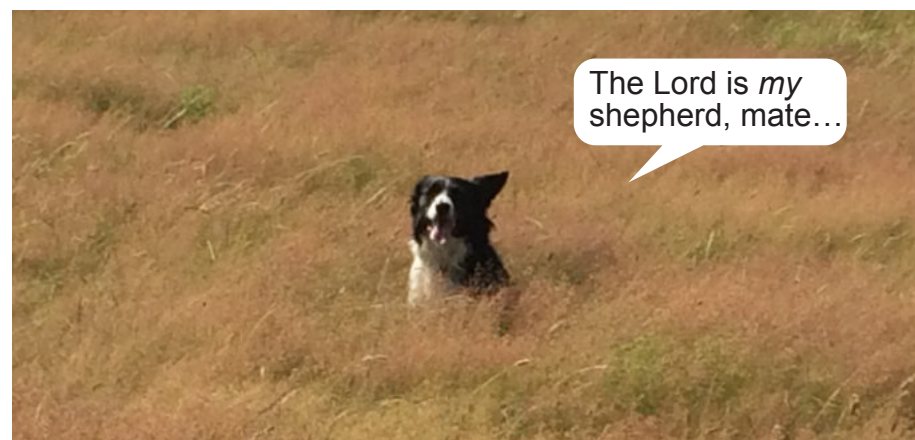
Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Exodus 1: 8–2.10

Psalms 124

Romans 12: 1–8

Matthew 16: 13–20



Knowing God : Not Always Straightforward

by Duncan Reid

Recently our cousin Karen's youngest son, Bradley, died of pancreatic cancer, aged 34. Strictly speaking, Karen is Gary's cousin, but she and I were brought up in the same London suburb; her sister went to my school; we are of the same clay. Gary largely grew up with Karen, being of a similar age, but inevitably came the time for moving about the country for work and relationships, and thus we have seen precious little of Karen's three boys. It would be fair to say we hardly knew Brad before his funeral.

We knew a few things *about* him: most significantly that as a little lad of 13 months he had contracted an infection of some sort, as a consequence of which the lower part of his body was paralysed and he was forced to spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair. The other significant thing about Brad was that just over a year ago we heard of his cancer diagnosis. He underwent a huge operation which appeared to have been successful but evidently not for long.

It was just a day or two before Brad died that Gary was talking to Karen about Brad's wishes for his funeral: was he thinking of a religious service—at least a few prayers, maybe a well-known hymn? 'Brad doesn't want anything like that,' said Karen, 'in fact he said to me, "If I get up there and see Him, I'm going to biff him on the nose!"' (needless to say, they were not his actual words). I found that very bleak and difficult to deal with (I still do) but how could anyone blame him for feeling like that?

Anyway, the time and place for the funeral were set, and we were on board to travel up to Leeds to support Karen and her family, not really knowing what to expect of a funeral in a posh country hotel.

The whole thing turned out to be quite a revelation. It was there that, in a sense, we got to know Brad the person through his many close, loving and loyal friends who came to pay tribute to him and to honour his life. Brad's big thing had been computer gaming, at which he had been amazingly successful with an international reputation (and an important world record to boot). One might be tempted to imagine a life of relative immobility: the wheelchair, the computer screen, remote online so-called 'friends'... No! Not a bit of it! Brad had travelled independently to far-flung places, he had a lovely girlfriend, he regularly met up with his many friends, some of whom spoke so eloquently and warmly about him. One young man said that he felt Brad and he were best friends and that he was finding out that he was by no means the only one. It was a painfully sad occasion, but not bleak or hopeless because we were all being given so much. For me, the particular qualities of Brad that came across, were his ability to amass special friends

and his determination to meet life head on and to never duck out of difficult challenges. We travelled back south, thoughtful and reflective, but buoyed up and inspired.

What has all this got to do with 'Knowing God'? I'm not sure. Back home the following Sunday in church, Fran's sermon was, funnily enough, centered around 'difficult times'. We know we should trust God in all things and we know he wants the best for us. That's all very well when things are running smoothly; but when things are tough, whither our faith then?

For some reason I keep finding my thoughts straying to the final stanza of T.S. Eliot's 'Journey of the Magi':

*... were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? ...*

*... I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different ...*

Eliot's narrator, one of the Wise Men from the Nativity story in Matthew's Gospel, is completely perplexed at what he has witnessed, and the experience has changed him:

... no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation ...

All I can do is to glibly grasp at a cliché: 'God works in mysterious ways'.

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Another Home St Catherine's Home – Ventnor Isle of Wight

by Mike Bone

I. 16th September 1947 to 27th April 1948

If my dear parents had received and kept the letter, sent in September 1947, the first from their oldest son and probably written in capital letters and in pencil: it must have been a continual heart breaker: 'Dad and Mum — come and take me home — I don't like it here — love ...' I think I must have been given a stamped envelope by dear Dad, who the day before had escorted me on a now forgotten journey, where excitement and anxiety concluded in a realisation that there was not a 'going back' part in this trip.

It must have been the following day that I persuaded a young enough nurse to accompany me out of Chapel Landing by the big church-like door, to cross the steep road to a pillar box immediately opposite the home (it's still there I think), posting that furtive scrap, certainly my first ever letter, and not really believing it would reach its destination, let alone result in a quick return home.

The worst was always the first morning, waking up in a strange bed having sobbed yourself to sleep. Waking away from the familiar to the immersing strange chatter, the bells, smells—porridge in the refectory below Chapel Landing or Lower Ward—and a desperate sense that a private inside part of you was not really there, that it would all suddenly become home again.

Well of course it did become home—eventually—once a friend or two with a name replaced the companionship of the strangely fading memories of my younger brothers, way back in that other place. When firm kindness was dispensed and shared with fellow 'wheezers' as during an 'attack' we joined the morning Ephedrine and Franol queue, and when tears of longing were replaced by night-time tears as we asthmatically chorused in our gasps for breath.



Michael at St Catherine's, c.1948.

And when a circle of friendship developed and secrets could be shared. and when the meal timetable became familiar and you had your regular chair, and were accepted within a dining family group, and routines were established.

But I do recall my nervous attempts at divesting of that 'new boy' label, and how the slowly gained confidence and stability were rocked when I ventured to ask a fair and sympathetic looking older boy, sitting nearby at breakfast one morning, 'How long have you been here?' His nonchalant 'Seven years' left me with a sense of foreboding and awe.

Time was measured by your favourite clothes (corduroy jacket with shorts) reappearing through the laundry cycle.

I remember sleeping once outdoors on the landing overlooking the misty, bejewelled channel, where I saw the old Cunard *Queen Elizabeth* and/or *Queen Mary* on their fortnightly Atlantic crossings.

Occasional depth charges would rock Ventnor as these were disposed of as an immediate post-war exercise, the plume appearing in the sea a few seconds before the explosion reached us. The pier was still split in 1947, also as a post-war deterrent to enemy landings.



Ventnor Pier, c.1950.

Schooling took place in a couple of low-level buildings below the playground: quite formal by today's standards and almost entirely provided by one or two staff. Lessons were punctuated with many walks and outdoor activities. These included walks to Steephill Cove, enlivened with the diversion of teasing an old lady (a Russian Princess, we thought!), who lived in a wooden stilted house down at the rocky water's edge of Myrtle Bay,

lobbing a pebble at her shingled roof, hoping that she would appear on the landing — 'It wasn't me, Miss!'

Seventy years later I discover that this was the home of an indomitable woman, who resolutely lived a considerable part of her life 'off-grid' (as it is called nowadays), the courageous Olivia Parkes.* The type of life that could have inspired a novel writer.



Olivia Parkes in her hut at Ventnor.

Sundays were special, given the Anglican High Church affiliation and dedicated guardianship of the community of the East Grinstead Sisters. Much later in life I realises that these dedicated people were also once young and full of life's expectations before discovering by design, calling, or chance that fulfilment equates to control and sacrifice.

II. 18th January 1949 to 25th April 1950

My second stay at the home is more associated with warmth and a sense of community, but coming to Ventnor I was once again preoccupied by the thought that I was leaving my family behind.

The contemplation triggered by the plunge into the dark tunnel section of the railway journey under Boniface Down was followed by that fantastic vista of the Channel as you left the Ventnor Station forecourt, always associated with halcyon days by sea and water wherever I have travelled.

* Michael Freeman and Robert Trowbridge, *Britannia: The Extraordinary Life of Olivia Parkes, Ventnor, Isle of Wight* (Ventnor 2024).

The excitement of the final return journey however, with less worry, encouraged a more concentrated study on travelling details. For instance, I remember always that model of Noah's Ark (the first Life Boat), in Ventnor Station, as well as those quaint saddle-tank steam engines, the smell of steam and coal, and the driver and station master signalling block exchange with their loops and keys as the engines departed on the single track into the tunnel on to Ryde. The thrill of a visit to the engine room of the paddle steamer as it plied between Ryde and Portsmouth, the magnificent sweep of those shiny connecting rods and flywheels.

Every day seemed a sunny day!



Paddle Steamer Ryde.

I mainly stayed at Elm Grove, a splendid house in large grounds, where we felt ourselves to be the 'seniors', the real 'wheezers' and old lags. It had its own house staff and a more elevated view over Ventnor. It was closer to the Station, and we woke every day to the 'dift-doft, dift-doft' of the brake vacuum pumps. I remember the large assembly hall and stage (the ballroom of the original house?), the main gates and the tennis court, and the 'Asphalt' overlooking the gently sloping field down to the vegetable gardens and connecting wall to the Home. The early morning physical exercises on the Asphalt were not always conducive to believing that this would quicken a return to my mainland home, the image of which was slowly disappearing.

It was during my second stay that some of us at Elm Grove were involved in the Ventnor Carnival and the St Catherine's Home float. Included in the procession of floats was the small Nova Espero clinker-built boat with an upturned pram dinghy acting as a cabin. This was the boat that the Yarmouth Life Boat coxswain's sons Colin and Stan Smith had built and in which they had just completed an Atlantic crossing from Nova Scotia to



Elm Grove, St Catherine's Home, Ventnor.

Dartmouth, arriving on 18 August 1949. They became national heroes. The crossing was even more remarkable in the absence of modern navigational aids.

The one or two audiences with the Home's founder, Sister Kathleen, were I believe a routine, usually on a Sunday, that she followed to keep in touch with us as individuals. Maybe it was because of some paternal patronage, but I was soon earmarked and steered towards an early Catechism under the tutoring of the Sisters, and it was my father's High Church interest that kept me in focus. This resulted in a trip with others to St Mary's Cowes and confirmation by the Bishop of Portsmouth (I think Bishop Launcelot Fleming).

I was on my best behaviour and responded only in the most positive terms to any enquiries concerning my health, physical and spiritual. After all, I was in the presence of a holy representative of the Almighty, perhaps a direct link!

St Catherine's and Sister Kathleen are synonymous to me.

I also found myself a regular acolyte at mass on Sundays and even once a boat boy (carrying the incense 'boat'). I am not sure that Potter's asthma powder and incense are entirely without medical and spiritual benefits. But they had a mixed effect on some!

On my journey back to Waterloo I recall seeing the construction on the South Bank of the Skylon, the Dome of Discovery, and the Festival Hall as London got ready for the Festival of Britain. It was then that I had to rediscover another home and regain the companionship of my barely recognisable younger brothers, and recall with fondness the friends and the home I had left on a sunny island.

Out and About

by Gary Marriott

I'm sad to say I have seen nothing of Cecilia the Snake since my last report. She may well have been predated by a bird of prey, of which we have many, or even a fellow human. There are still some, unable to enjoy nature, who would feel anxious about a harmless grass snake. Maybe she has just moved on.

We are now in our third heatwave this year, and the heat and lack of rain or morning dew is telling on the garden. I don't like to use a hose for obvious reasons, so use only stored water with a watering can. As a result, the usually 7ft. tall towering Rudbeckia is only 4 to 5ft. tall, the hollyhocks are far smaller, and even the canna lilies are not as tall as in previous years. However, I have some impressive fennel, which has chosen its own favourite spaces, a small border of white Gaura which has survived well, and wild carrot in both the wild meadow (overgrown lawn ...) and the borders. The latter has beautiful, delicate, white umbels and always attracts the wonderful little red soldier beetle, which as children we knew as 'blood suckers'.

Stepping out of the garden, there is much to admire or catch your interest. I was again mesmerised by the humming of the bees in the flowering lime trees in Stubb Lane back in June, which now seems an age away. The churchyard has been a wonder of wild flowers, now being mown, I wonder if we will ever see the glow-worms there again? The new thatched roof on the house near the Crowham Manor entrance, now complete, took a lot of work in some of our less hospitable weather earlier in the year, but was enjoyable to watch. There are two lots of building work in Cackle Street, one being particularly sympathetic to its surroundings; the other will be more of a contrast.

Further away, I must also mention the new staircase erected in recent years in Kenilworth Castle, allowing glorious views previously enjoyed by Queen Elizabeth I from the apartment built for her visit. If you are ever that way I recommend a visit. Back at home take a look at the air brick in the front of St Elmo, next to Brede Garage. I have never seen the like locally: it is vine and grapes in terracotta, I'd be very pleased if I were the owner of such a piece.

I was talking to John Gaylon, who was very keen I highlight the Village Garden competition. David Oliver and I had the pleasure of driving and walking around the many gardens that were nominated all over Brede and Broad Oak. I have to admit to seeing so many wonderful displays that have obviously benefited from a lot of love, devotion, and hard work. As a result of our efforts David was able to tell people he walked 18,000 steps in the

process. One of the other results is bumping into people I would never normally see, and in doing so, learning about them and a little more about our community. The results of our meanderings were difficult to pin down as there is so much that is so good. I hope you came along to the 'Garden Competition and Shield Award' at the Village Hall a few weeks ago to find out. The event, organised by our Parish Council, is always a delightful occasion where you can experience community spirit in action.



Air brick, St Elmo.

Lastly spare a thought for the wonderful craftsmen who have been working on the church tower roof in all this heat and sun. They haven't complained once and have remained cheerful and pleasant throughout. Thank you to all those who have just carried on throughout this heatwave: you add much colour and strength to the tapestry of our communities.

Midsummer Beauties

by Lynne Bramley

Burnished Brass

Aptly named and one of my all-time favourites. An overnight arrival in the trap which glistens with golden intensity. It's a big drinker and its tipple includes Buddleia and Sweet William, but it is particularly keen on red valerian and honeysuckle: all good, sweet, sickly stuff, a moth's version of Sauternes. The green caterpillars with small white dots and pale thin lines look nothing like the finished moth, and they thrive on nettles, so do keep a small patch in your garden if you want to catch sight of a Burnished Brass flying at night.



Peach Blossom

A sumptuous moth with a pattern of pink or light brown markings which wouldn't be amiss on a fashion plate. Around all summer, and an overnight visitor which is attracted by light. The young caterpillar is brown and ugly, with humps along its back, which I think make it look like a small dragon. It is confident enough to sit on the upper side of a bramble whilst feeding during the day, even though the greatest risk to any moth is the caterpillar stage. Ugly duckling and swan spring to mind.



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Chichester Cathedral

by Steve Wrigley

There is something of the under-ocean here:
Echoes rise up, as bubbles, towards
Clerestory light, to currents high above.
Something also of an ocean floor
Where as creatures we progress, tentative
On scoured pathways only to branch off
At random into compassed transepts
Or pause to contemplate a figured tomb.

Shafts of light descend; stained glass pictures
Capture them for stories, coloured to attract
An earlier unlettered congregation.
Navigating these waters, the depths
Of centuries, if merely shy participants,
We are, not least, illuminated.

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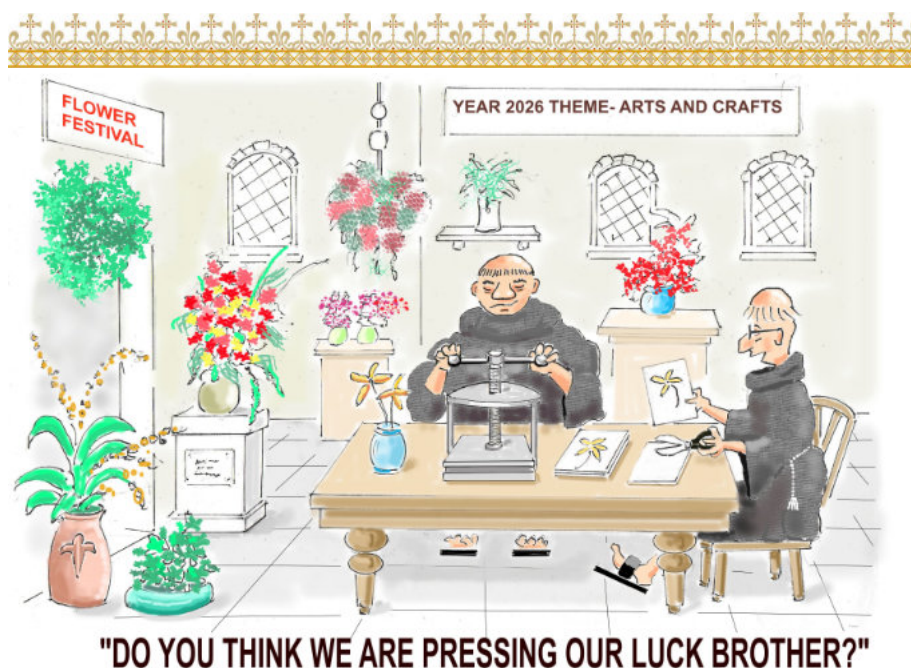
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greensleeves
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Cartoon by Mike Bone

Anonymous Hero

by Ro Gardner

At eight years old, one of my jobs during the school holidays was to make a daily trip to the corner shop for my mum. I was a bit of a dreamer, was seldom in any hurry, and would chat to anyone I met.

On this particular day, there was a man waiting at the bus stop, whom I had never seen before. As I approached the bus stop he had his back to me. He was quite tall, and I could see that his hair grew in random tufts from a scalp which was a patchwork of pink and white skin. When he heard me approaching him, he sort of cocked his head, then turned around as I drew level with him.

He had no face.

I think I must have recoiled in horror, because I remember him saying, 'It's all right, young man, I won't hurt you.'

I ran all the way home. I was dying to recount my experience to my mother, but when she asked me what the matter was, I couldn't tell her. I awoke in the small hours of the next morning, and the grotesquely damaged man filled my thoughts. After some hours, I realised that it wasn't just his appearance that horrified me, but the fact that my reaction to him must have been very hurtful. I resolved to put matters right at my next opportunity.

I looked for him every time I went to the shop, and, sure enough, there he was on the same day the following week. Living where we did, I had seen other badly burned airmen, going to and from East Grinstead Hospital – but his injuries were much the worst I had ever seen. Even so, it took as much courage as I could muster to approach him.

'Er ... excuse me, Sir,' I said nervously. 'I'm sorry that I ran away.'

His face was every bit as mutilated as I had remembered it, but he recognised me.

'That's all right young man, my face is a bit of a shock until you get used to it. You aren't the first to react like that and I doubt you'll be the last, so please don't worry.'

He had something like an American accent, but softer. I found out much later that he was Canadian. Then his bus came along. From what he had said, I knew that he was commonly confronted by the sort of horrified look of which I had been guilty. I felt an overwhelming compassion for him.

So, the following week I was at the bus stop early, hoping for a longer conversation. Eventually, an ambulance dropped him off with Mr Avery, a

gentleman who lived in my road. I said hello to Mr Avery, who was still receiving treatment for an injury sustained in the Great War. My new friend went to the bus stop as usual, and I could tell that he was pleased to see me again.

As I'd hoped, we had about fifteen minutes conversation before the Tonbridge bus came, and I learned a lot about him. He asked my name, and he told me that his was Bob Jeffries, and I was to call him Bob. I remember that I was surprised, because in those days it was unusual for an adult to encourage a child to call them by their Christian name.

When I saw him, he was always on his way home from a weekly visit to the Queen Victoria Hospital in East Grinstead. There, he was having his face rebuilt after surviving an air crash in the last year of the war. Like most boys of my age, I was fascinated by aircraft, and I wanted to know exactly what had happened. Bless him, I don't suppose that it was a subject he really wanted to revisit, but he told me all, and I remember it to this day in every detail.

He had been a rear gunner in a Stirling bomber, and having returned from a night raid on the Ruhr, relatively unscathed, his aircraft had just lined up on the runway when it was jumped by a German night fighter.

Hit by cannon shells, two of the engines caught fire, and the pilot crash-landed the plane. The fire trucks were harried by strafing attacks from Luftwaffe fighters, and amidst a maelstrom of flame and exploding ammunition, all the crew except Bob perished. He was dragged from his gun turret, aflame, but mercifully unconscious.

When eventually he came round, he was extensively burned, in terrible pain, and not expected to live. After twenty-four hours clinging to life by his fingernails, his condition miraculously stabilised. Much later, he started on an extended course of treatment under the legendary Archibald McIndoe, to restore his face.

In the next few weeks, I learnt much about Bob. He had a wife in British Columbia, who, on seeing a photo of his disfigurement, decided she would take her chances elsewhere. Bob bore this news, it seemed to me, quite stoically, but I knew he was desperately concerned as to whether he would ever see his small daughter again.

He wore a green eye shield, and smoked his cigarettes in a long cigarette holder. Everyone smoked in those days, but I remember thinking that the cigarette holder was, perhaps, a bit of an affectation. I have since realised he used it because he had no lips to hold his cigarette. Nor did he have eyebrows, proper eyelids, or a nose. I also knew that he was in constant

pain from his chest, although he never elaborated.

One day, Bob was not at his bus stop. Two weeks running I watched Mr Avery walk home from the ambulance – but no Bob. On the third week, I waylaid Mr Avery. He looked a bit sheepish as I approached him.

'You're going to ask me about Mr Jeffries, aren't you?' he said. I nodded.

He put a hand on my shoulder, a gesture that was sufficiently unusual for me to know that bad news was coming.

'Roland.' He paused and I could see that whatever he had to tell me was difficult for him. 'I should have told you before, that Mr Jeffries has passed away.'

I was unfamiliar with this term, and for a moment thought that he meant Bob had returned home, perhaps to Canada.

Mr Avery, unaware of my confusion, carried on.

'Did he tell you about how his plane crashed?'

'Yes,' I said. 'That's how he got those awful burns.'

By this time we had reached my house.

'Is your mother home?' he asked me, and when I said that she was, 'I think perhaps I should talk to her.'

As we reached our front door, Mother, who had seen us coming up the path, opened it.

'Hello Mr Avery,' she said, 'Is everything all right?'

'I'm sorry to bother you, but may I come in for a moment, Mrs Gardner?'

Mother took us into the sitting room. I sat up very close to her on the settee.

Mr Avery asked my mother to confirm how much I had told her about Bob, and then went on.

'Did you know about his Irvin Jacket?'

'No,' we replied almost simultaneously.

'Well,' said Mr Avery, slowly. 'When he was trapped in the burning gun turret, all his clothes were burned off him. Except ...' and here he paused and looked at me. '... Except for the metal zip of his flying jacket. It became red hot and ... and buried itself in his chest.'

My mother had hold of my hand so tightly, that it was hurting me.

'The surgeons decided that they would have to wait until he was strong enough to withstand the operation before they tried to remove it.' Mr Avery looked down at his hands clasped in his lap, then continued. 'He had the operation three weeks ago, and never came round from the anaesthetic.'

I don't remember Mr Avery taking his leave – the only thing I recall is that I had a terrible pain in my chest.

Thinking back to when I was eight years old, I regret not having had the chance to say goodbye to my anonymous hero. I knew his name, and yet he was anonymous, because I never knew what the real Bob looked like. But the worst thing was that I never thought to ask his little girl's name.



A WWII Irvin flying jacket. © Regimentals.

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Eat the Seasons August – Summer Herbs

by Gill Potterton

Cooking with fresh herbs is a delight in the summer, when the flavoursome 'soft herbs' including basil, tarragon, mint, parsley, chervil, and chives are in abundant supply. Most herbs are easy to grow, and being able to pick handfuls as required should inspire you to new culinary heights! Whether you grow them yourself or buy them, it is a culinary crime to relegate fresh herbs to the sidelines by using merely a few sprigs for garnish and extra colour. All these summer herbs can be used in a multitude of different



French tarragon. © Urban Herbs UK.

dishes: to flavour mayonnaise, vinaigrettes, savoury butters, cream sauces, dumplings, savoury scones, mash, rice, pasta, and couscous dishes, or even cakes and biscuits. Handfuls of herbs can enliven green salads, or can be pounded into pastes and used to marinate or to top grilled fish, chicken, or vegetables.

My top three favourite summer herbs are basil, tarragon, and mint. Basil is a tender, low-growing perennial, originally native to India and therefore favouring warm climates, which is now widely known, due to its prominence in Thai, Vietnamese, and of course Italian cuisine. Tarragon originates from Siberia in Central Asia, is less well known in Britain, but much used in French cooking, and should be used sparingly as it has a deceptively strong flavour. Mint has numerous varieties, has been used by many cultures over the centuries as a herbal remedy and is well-known as a flavouring for lamb, vegetables, sauces, jellies, and hot and cold beverages.

Here are some ideas using these three beautiful summer herbs.

- Basil can be used in sweet as well as savoury dishes. It has a real affinity for summer soft fruits, in particular strawberries, raspberries, and plums. Simply add chopped leaves at the last minute to fruit sauces, compotes, or jams.

- For a colourful buffet salad in the heat of summer, layer sliced tomatoes with slices of melon and plenty of torn basil leaves, and drizzle with a balsamic vinegar and orange juice dressing before serving.
- To enliven roast chicken with the summer fragrance of tarragon, mix 4 tablespoons chopped tarragon with 50g butter and a little salt and pepper, place half inside the bird, then smear the rest over the top before roasting.
- Add chopped tarragon at the last minute to a stir-fry of sliced fennel, courgettes, and asparagus tips, for a wonderful summer vegetable accompaniment to salmon or chicken.
- Fresh mint and cucumber raita is a lovely dip or a garnish to serve with curry. Finely chop a large handful of mint, half a cucumber, and half a green chilli, and add with a pinch of salt to 225ml natural yoghurt.
- For a sweet and sour strawberry salsa, heat 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar and 2 teaspoons of any orange or strawberry liqueur in a small pan, dissolve 1 tablespoon caster sugar in it, then allow to cool. Toss in 500g chopped strawberries and 20g chopped fresh mint, and serve with ice cream or yoghurt.

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The Etchinghams of Court Lodge (A 15th-century medieval manor house)

by Gary Quinell

Etchingham, not the village, but the family after whom it was named, has a long association with Udimore. In 1066, William the Conqueror gave the village of Dodimere (Udimore in the Domesday Book) to his cousin, the Count of Eu, who installed the Norman earl Reinbert as the Sheriff of Hastings and he is shown as the Lord of the Manor. The Domesday Book also says that the lands before 1066 were held by Earl Godwin. He had become one of the most powerful earls in England having sided with King Cnut (Canute), who ruled England from 1016–1035; and his daughter was married to Edward the Confessor, who ruled from 1042–1066.

His son Harold Godwinson was, of course, King of England in 1066 until defeated and killed at the Battle of Hastings. As well as Udimore, Reinbert held estates at Mountfield, Whatlington, and Salehurst. He was the ancestor of the great Etchingham family, who owned and often lived at Court Lodge. They were residents until the latter half of the 15th century when, with no more male heirs to continue the name, Margaret, the last Etchingham, married Sir John Elrington, treasurer to the household of Edward IV, who became the owner.

The original Court Lodge was in position long before the Battle of Hastings. Dodimere probably means Dod's pond or it could have just as easily been a medieval typo for Uda's mere. The area was part of the Rape of Hastings. Rapes are uniquely named subdivisions of Sussex, the word meaning 'property seized' long before there was a sexual connotation. Hastings is the most easterly of the six Sussex Rapes and borders Kent. It took its name from the Hæstingas Tribe who were almost certainly Jutish people, who originally settled in Kent in the 400s after the Romans left, and made their way to Sussex. They were among the earliest to be converted to Christianity by Augustine in 597 AD. So there are no pagan relics or burial sites in our area compared to the rest of Sussex, which was settled by South Saxons who left much evidence of their heathen way of life in their barrows.

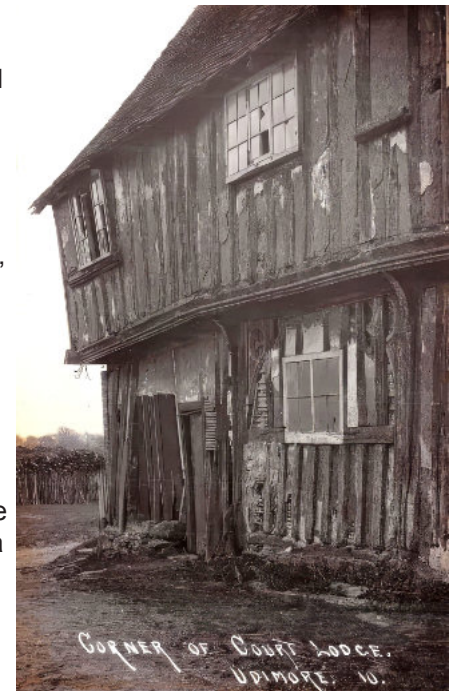
John Elrington, was granted permission by Edward IV to crenellate his houses at Udimore and Great Dixter in 1479. So it is most likely this is when the later Court Lodge was built either on top of or very close to the former manor house, which had in its time been host to kings, including Edward I, who stayed as a guest of his friend, William de Etchingham, whilst overseeing the building of Winchelsea on the hill at Iham. On another visit, on 12 August 1297, whilst preparing for an attack on Flanders, he issued an edict from Court Lodge to his people and in particular his barons who had to finance his expensive wars against the French, the Welsh, and the Scots.



Court Lodge, Udimore.

Edward III also stayed at Court Lodge in 1350: the royal party—including his sons the Black Prince and John of Gaunt, and his wife Queen Philippa—spent the night there in revelry having defeated the Spanish at the battle of Winchelsea.

The house lost importance after that, and was used for labourers' accommodation and storage from the late 1600s. The number of families residing, as shown in the census, varied from two to ten, with up to 41 people living there. By 1912 the owner wanted to sell the building but retain the land. There were plans to dismantle the building and re-erect it in Alexandra Park, Hastings, as a museum, but

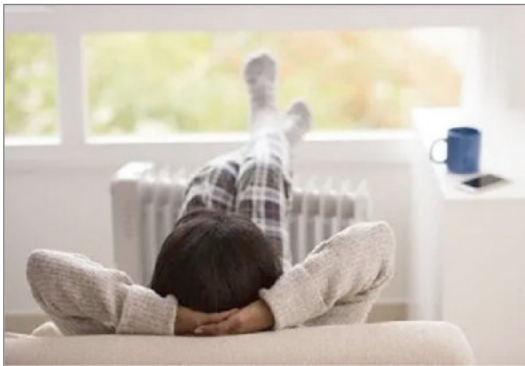


Corner of Court Lodge. Early 20th-century postcard.

funds could not be raised and the proposal fell through. Eventually the artist Mr Lawson Wood bought the building and Court Lodge, once frequented by kings and courtiers, was moved from East Sussex to Groombridge in Kent, where it stands today. It was sympathetically restored in the Arts and Crafts style, and is Grade II listed.



Court Lodge rebuilt at Groombridge.





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Brede Residents 75 Years Ago

by RoseMary Musgrave and Jennifer Sparkes

... continuing our series of the recollections of Jennifer Sparkes and RoseMary Musgrave, daughters of Eric and Margery Winch, who compiled these childhood memories of local residents as a COVID lock-down project in 2020–21. Our final historic perambulation through Brede starts at the junction of Pottery Lane and the A28.



View north up the A28 and the junction with Pottery Lane, 1920s.

After the war Dr and Mrs Palmer with two young sons lived for some time in Mill House, a house facing the main road at the junction with Pottery Lane. He was not a general practitioner in the village, and we think he may have been a consultant at one of the hospitals in Hastings.

Turning into Pottery Lane, in one of the cottages on the right-hand side lived Seymour Apps; he was a member of the Brede Church choir and the family participated in village life. Presumably he lived in Seymour Cottage, the first on the right, named after his grandfather Seymour Apps Sr. (died 1910). Also, in this row we think lived Rufus and Irene Packham with their daughter Iris and disabled son Bruce. Rufus died in June 1988 aged 88; Irene died four years later at the age of 78.

There were no houses on the left hand side until York Cottage, but there was a pond near the top of Mount Ephraim Shaw where there grew a variety of rushes that were cut and used for tying the young hop vines to the poles.



Seymour Cottage (centre), one of a group of three cottages.

The characteristic of the rushes was that when picked and run between finger and thumb they flattened out and therefore could be used rather like raffia, whereas most rushes do not flatten because they have a pithy interior and remain round.

In the house before The Well House (Green Braes) lived the Dunthorn(e) sisters. They were regular attenders at church, but we know nothing about them. One of them had a false nose, which was rather fascinating as one could see the junction and sometimes it slipped. Poor dear: nose prosthesis was not available at that time!

Miss Margaret Greely lived in The Well House where she ran a junior school for children aged 5 to 11. She was born in Northern India where she grew up with Arab horses. In 1942 she started owning Arabians and then set up Well House Stud, breeding colts in the orchard behind her house. She advised King Hussein of Jordan on his Arab stallions, visiting that country during the summer holidays. In 1976 her book *Arabian Exodus* was published. She was well known throughout the Arab horse world.

A track ran up beside her house that led to a mound where there had once been a windmill, which gave its name to Mill House. There was at least one house or bungalow where the Stainsby family lived: Peter and Molly and their daughters Margaret and Judith, who was born there. Peter was a conscientious objector but we do not know if or what non-combatant role he had.



The Well House.



Brede windmill, 1904.

Memory becomes somewhat vague as to other residents. On the right-hand side lived the Boyce-Weller family with daughters Victoria and Camilla. Beyond them for a while lived the Savilles. Mr Saville had a bookshop in Hastings. His brother Malcolm Saville wrote books for children, notably the *Lone Pine* series and many on countryside topics. The Savilles had four boys, some of whom we think were adopted.

On the left set back over a field was Pottery Farm House, a cottage where the Wells family lived with a brood of children. In September 1960 there was a tragic fire in which Mrs Edith Wells died at the age of 35 when re-entering the house to bring out one of her children: her daughter Helen, aged 9, who also died. They lost everything, but the village rallied round and people housed the children until they got another home. We had Margaret, the youngest, who was about two years old. She was a pretty child with blond curly hair and very well-behaved considering the trauma she was going through.

Back on the right-hand side the last house was Steeplands where the farmer Mr Parfitt lived with his wife and their housekeeper Norah Ashdown. It was a big house built on his land probably in the 1920s. We know his land lay to the north and abutted on that of Moorsholm. When Mr Parfitt retired, we are fairly confident that John Edwards of Moorsholm bought the land (he bought our farm). This was not a hop farm.



Steeplands.

Going down Steep Hill across the river and on the right was a large hop garden owned by the Newbles of Fryman's Farm. They, like us, used local people to pick their hops. Other farms often employed people from Brighton or London and put them up in 'hopper huts', though a special Maidstone and District double decker bus used to transport pickers from Hastings to Hare Farm.

The main lane ran on to Sedlescombe but there was a turning to the right (Frymans Lane that changes its name at one point to Goatham Lane). This lane goes up to join the B2089 near Chitcombe. Our main memory of this area is of setting off on bicycles each year with two-pound jam jars with string round their necks tied on to the handlebars to go and get frogspawn from the reservoir. The bicycles were parked at the entrance to a small path that went through coniferous trees and led down to the top end of the reservoir. Here it was marshy, but the water was shallow and there was plenty of frogspawn, unluckily also plenty of grass snakes—some huge—these we did not like! The frogspawn was taken home and put into an old zinc bath in which we watched them develop, and then when they were tiny frogs we usually took them down to the valley, where they stood a fair chance of survival.

At the junction of Goatham Lane with the B2089 was a farm owned by the Warne family and usually referred to as Warne's Farm. I think this was the same family as Joe Warne and the other shop in the village.

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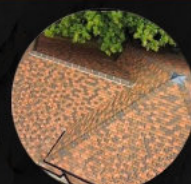
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Brede and Udimore Luncheon Club

The Lunch Club met on a bright sunny day in June, and we were served a traditional meal of fish and chips, with peas and tartare sauce. The dessert of strawberries and cream, with meringues, was most welcome and just perfect for a summer's day!

We extend our thanks to Arianne, Spencer, and the team at the Red Lion for serving us such a lovely lunch and for their excellent service.

The Lunch Club meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 12.30 p.m. at the Red Lion in Brede. Next Lunch: Tuesday 25th August.

For information about the Club please contact me on 01424 882007

Frances Parnham (Membership Secretary)

Brede Women's Institute

On a very hot day, our July Meeting opened with a welcome to members and the singing of 'Jerusalem'. The business part of the Meeting included updates of events happening in July and a reminder that we do not meet during August. Cards and pretty pot plants were then presented to the many members who celebrate their birthdays in July and August.

Unfortunately, our speaker, Emma Baker, was very unwell and not able to come to our Meeting. We wish her a good recovery and hope to see her again in the near future. Many thanks to Joy Wild, who stepped into the breach, and cheerily organised us all in a fun game of bingo. After the raffle was drawn, we enjoyed a relaxing afternoon tea. Our thanks to Rhiannon and Karen for the truly wonderful cakes!

The competition, 'A Pottery Item', was won by Karen Blake.

There is no Meeting in August. We next meet on Wednesday 9th September at 2.00 p.m. in Brede Village Hall. The competition is 'A Money Box'.

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. It would be lovely to see you!

'Wednesday Welcome' is taking a break in August but we will be back again on 2nd September. Our activities are held in the Church Hall from 2.00–4.00 p.m. Please come along and join us for a relaxing time and tasty refreshments. (Don't forget that we also have a 'book swap' for paperback fiction.)

Community. David Swales, our Community Worker, has continued his weekly pastoral visits to Roselands Care Home and is also in regular contact with Whitegates Care Home in Westfield—a recent singalong session with the residents and some of our members was greatly appreciated.

We at Trinity work regularly with Brede Primary School and we are looking forward to welcoming the whole School for their Leaver's Assembly at the end of term, which will be led by David Swales and friends from the Church.

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

Frances Parnham



Brede Mothers' Union

We had a lovely July meeting in the church, where we held a short service and then had a chat over a cup of tea.

The Mothers' Union Picnic in Polegate sadly coincided with the Parish Council Awards in Brede Village Hall. But we had a short quiz so that we could raise some money for District Funds which are very low at present.

We are celebrating Mary Sumner Day at Willingdon on Tuesday 11th August at 11 a.m. The Branches will all take their banners: it is a lovely sight to see them all being paraded through the church at the beginning and the end of the service.

In September we will be back, meeting at St George's on the first Wednesday of the month at 1.30 p.m. We are hoping to have some new people then! If any of you would like to come and join us on that day please let me know: 01424 882037 or rhiannonoliver20@gmail.com

Rhiannon Oliver (Branch Leader & Bexhill District MU Chairman)

Brede Friendly Circle

In June we went to Tibbs Farm for coffee: we began inside but then moved outside as it was too noisy when we were trying to talk to each other. In fact we were enjoying ourselves so much we did not realise the time and did not leave until just after 12.15 p.m.



In July we always have our garden party. This year we had two choices that fell through and in the end everybody came to our garden. We had cream scones, cream cakes and shortbread with our tea. David kindly put up the gazebos to keep us out of the sun.

We do not meet in August but will be going out again in September. We are thinking of taking the bus to Tenterden and having coffee somewhere there. If you feel this is something you would like to do then please phone Carol on 01424 883262. She will be pleased to hear from you, especially if you are a car driver.

Rhiannon Oliver

Brede Design with Flowers

In July we had some new members join us in the garden on a glorious evening to do a basket design.

We meet on every second Monday at 7 p.m., except in August due to all the work for our 50th (or is it 49th) Flower Festival. We need about 100 people from our community to help us pull it off.

But in September we will be doing a design with Medolina sticks, which should be interesting.

If you wish to learn more about flower arranging, please contact me on 01424 882037. Press the # key to get through or leave a message and I will return your call.

Rhiannon Oliver



BREDE AND UDIMORE PARISH CONTACTS

MAGAZINE

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

Editorial Team Benjamin Barnard, John Crook, Darryl Bird,
Nick Weekes
benno.barnard54@gmail.com

Subscriptions Steve Edwards
treasurer@stgeorgesbrede.org.uk
07702 173839

4CHARITIES

Mrs Liz Turgoose 01424 882657

BREDE MOTHERS' UNION

Mrs Rhiannon Oliver 01424 882037

FRIENDS OF ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

Dr John Crook john@john-crook.com

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH

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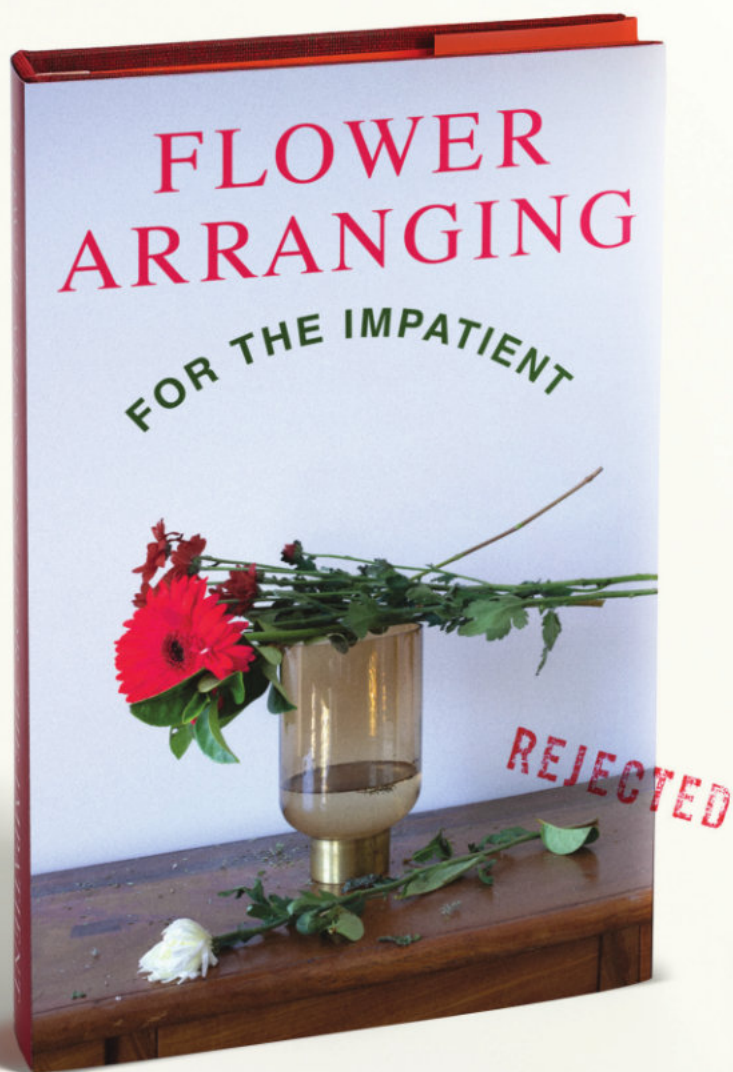
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Rear cover by Graham Johnson



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