



April 2020

Supported by



Chelsfield Park Hospital

The Newsletter and "What's On" Guide for Residents & Friends of Chelsfield Village

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Hello! If you are self-isolating, we can help. We live locally and are here to help if you need

Our name is: **Chelsfield Volunteers**

Our phone number is: **07767 211891**

Our email is: **chelsfieldvolunteers@gmail.com**

If you are self isolating due to COVID-19 we can help with:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Picking up shopping	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Posting mail	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medication/ prescription collection
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A friendly phone call	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urgent supplies	

- Please take precautions. Avoid physical contact (2m distance) and wash hands.
- Shopping should preferably be paid for by phone or online with the supplier, and volunteers will leave items on your door step.

#ViralKindness

HELP FOR THOSE SELF-ISOLATING BECAUSE OF COVID 19 – CHELSFIELD VOLUNTEERS

Chelsfield Volunteers is a group of locals who are helping people in our area who are self-isolating or cannot go out because of COVID 19.

We can pick up groceries, deliver prescriptions, and offer advice and a phone chat to anyone who is feeling isolated or anxious.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you need assistance and your family and friends are unable to help you. We do need to use our volunteers' time sensibly.

So please observe the following guidelines:

- ◆ If you need shopping and can use online systems then do try to get a supermarket delivery slot. If this take a few weeks we can tide you over by collecting groceries until then
- ◆ You may also be able to order and pay by phone from some local suppliers
- ◆ We are working with local pharmacies – Stevens in Green Street Green and Lloyds in Windsor Drive – to arrange regular deliver rounds of prescriptions. So do try to arrange for your prescription to be added to one of these runs

Please be careful – there are scammers about.

All our volunteer help will be arranged through the contacts in the leaflet, no one will cold call.

If you would like to volunteer with us please email Chelsfield Volunteers on chelsfieldvolunteers@gmail.com

With so many of us now confined to our homes, and wondering what to do with ourselves through this very difficult period make it your opportunity to write something for the Chelsfield Village Voice?

Share your concerns, your experiences and thoughts

Please send anything you feel suitable for the

May 2020 issue to:

chelsfieldvillagevoice@gmail.com

or post to:

**Chelsfield Village Voice
2 Bucks Cross Cottages
Chelsfield Village BR6 7RN
to arrive by
Sunday 26th April 2020**

The Earthworm

Life is difficult for all of us at present and it reminds me of a Chinese curse "may you live in interesting times". However, in a typically British manner, I'll carry on regardless with my monthly articles.

Having taken a walk down to Shoreham during a short spell of early March sunshine (in pre-lock-down days) I noticed how common the early shows of the plant 'Lords and Ladies' which I wrote about in last month's Village Voice were. I knew this was not an uncommon plant but was surprised at just how frequently I found it in the hedgerows when I actually looked for it. And on the topic of the moment, I walked from the bottom of Rock Hill towards Swanley a week later and had a fine view towards the city of London. To my surprise the grey miasma that usually hangs over London was gone. This appears to be due to the lack of traffic in the city and while I'm on the subject, it does seem strange to have a sky almost completely devoid

of air traffic.

This month I'm going to talk about one of the most important animals in the countryside and for that matter, the garden. The humble earthworm is one of those creatures that are all around us but we rarely think about. They do however conduct an invaluable service to the gardener and farmer as I will explain below.

There are three general types of earthworm.

Leaf litter - or compost-dwelling worms that are non-burrowing. These live at the soil-litter interface and eat decomposing organic matter and are called Epigeic. These include the 'red wiggler' types that are so useful in compost heaps.
Topsoil - or subsoil - dwelling worms that feed on soil. These burrow and create casts within the soil creating horizontal burrows in the upper 10–30 cm of soil and are called Endogeics.

Worms that construct permanent deep vertical burrows which they use

to visit the surface to obtain plant material for food, such as leaves are called Anecic, meaning "reaching up".

As long ago as 1881 Charles Darwin wrote:

"It may be doubted whether there are many other animals which have played so important a part in the history of the world, as have these lowly organized creatures".

Darwin estimated that arable land contains up to 53,000 worms per acre (13/m²), but more recent research has produced figures suggesting that even poor soil may support 250,000/acre (62/m²), whilst rich fertile farmland may have up to 1,750,000/acre (432/m²), meaning that the weight of earthworms beneath a farmer's soil can be greater than that of the livestock upon its surface. Richly organic topsoil populations of earthworms are much higher such that, for the 7 billion of us humans, each person alive today has the support of 7

million earthworms!

In many soils, earthworms play a major role in the conversion of large pieces of organic matter into rich humus, thus improving soil fertility. This is achieved by the worm's actions of pulling below the surface deposited organic matter such as leaf fall or manure, either for food or to plug its burrow. Once in the burrow, the worm will shred the leaf, partially digest it and mingle it with the earth and extrude the waste (the cast) on the surface. These casts can contain 40 percent more humus

than the top 9" (23 cm) of soil in which the worm is living. In conditions where humus is plentiful, the weight of casts produced may be greater than 4.5 kg (10 lb) per worm per year.

Amongst Darwin's many experiments, one involved placing small rocks in a protected part of a field and monitoring the condition of these rocks over a number of decades. As nearby worms created their casts from material under the rocks and deposited it on the surface, the rocks slowly submerged below the surrounding soil showing how the worms were re-

cycling subterranean soil. This experiment no doubt led to his statement quoted above. Indeed, investigations in the United States show that these casts are five times richer in nitrogen, seven times richer in phosphates, and 11 times richer in potassium than the surrounding upper 6 inches (150 mm) of soil.

The earthworm's burrowing also creates a multitude of channels through the soil and this is of great value in maintaining the soil structure, enabling the processes of aeration and drainage. Clearly a valuable friend to any farmer or gardener.

Earthworms are very simple creatures and have no special respiratory organs. Gases are exchanged directly through the moist skin and capillaries, where the oxygen is picked up by the haemoglobin dissolved in the blood and carbon dioxide is released. Because the skin acts as the lungs, worms are very sensitive to human



handling due to the dehydrating and toxic effects of the salt on your hand and this causes the writhing movements observed when one handles them.

The earthworm's mating method is a bizarre, almost alien Sci-fi process. Copulation and reproduction are separate processes and it occurs on the surface, most often at night.

Earthworms are hermaphrodites; that is, they have both male and female sexual organs. If you have ever wondered what the localised belt-shaped glandular swelling on an

earthworm is then the answer is the clitellum (see photo). This is part of the reproductive system that produces egg capsules. The mating pair overlap front ends and each exchanges sperm with the other. Sometime after copulation, long after the worms have separated, the clitellum secretes material which forms a ring around the worm. The worm then backs out of the ring, and as it does so, it injects its own eggs and the other worm's sperm into it. As the worm slips out of the ring, it is sealed and the embryonic worms then develop.

One last point concerning

the question: do worms survive, and even multiply if chopped in half? Well, from my research it does seem that the lowly earthworm can regenerate lost segments of its body although this ability varies between species and the extent of the damage. Although usually they just die! Some foreign species have been recorded as being able to regenerate two whole worms from a bisected specimen! So, maybe not so lowly after all – and very useful to the horticulturalist.

*Steve Fuller
April 2020*

Mutterings From The Millers

HOORAY, some great news during this very difficult time. We are thrilled to be able to report, that at the end of March, Peter was able to plant all the spring wheat, barley and oats. The conditions were excellent. A little wet about an 1" under the surface but that will give the seed moisture to help germination. The heavy and continuous rain had beaten down the top of

the soil and made a crust but the new drill easily managed to cut through and provide good seed bed. At one point, dust rose up from the drill! We wouldn't have believed that a week or so ago. He worked from the driest to wettest field which had dried out sufficiently by the end of the week. Believe it or not, if we had a little shower of rain over night, that would be perfect to "bed" the seeds

in. A dressing of fertiliser will be applied next.

Samples of the seed that should have been planted last autumn will be tested for germination but we don't envisage too many problems with it, but always better to be safe than sorry.

Steve's first drive of the truck with his new knee was to take the straw to the deer farm. As you



A few pictures to share this month. Peter drilling, me trying to roll off a straw bale and a picture of the female larch flowers, only out for a short time but great to see. The male flowers grow on the underside of the shoots and are clusters of creamy yellow anthers. The female flowers are sometimes known as larch roses.

know, Peter normally does this with the tractor and trailer but as he was busy planting, Steve and I both trundled down there with 4 bales at a time. I hadn't visited the farm, so was very interested to see the deer. There are three different breeds, fallow, sika and one which I now cannot remember the name of but it was lovely

to see them roaming the valley. It was good too to get out in the sunshine and do something manual. That was the last of the oat straw so no more deliveries to them for this season. We have a little wheat straw left but people still need it up until harvest time.



Our accredited crop inspection is on hold for the moment but they are trying to come up with a way of checking our details by another method.

We all know the weather saying, April showers bring May flowers but here is a new one. (Not that I heard a cuckoo in the last few years).

*The cuckoo comes in April,
and stays the month of May
Sings a song at midsummer,
And then goes away.*



The bird song now is wonderful and great to hear the chiff chaffs, of course we eagerly await the return of the swallows. Always a special moment when we see the first ones arrived. The cowslips are just emerging on Chelsfield Green.

*Chris Miller
Court Lodge Farm*

Making Chelsfield a Happy Place

Having lived in Chelsfield Village for 40 years now, I have had the pleasure of knowing many lovely neighbours, some of whom are still here, some long gone.

It has always been a nice place to live and I have considered myself lucky to have my home here. But at this time, this terribly scary time, we seem to be pulling closer together and I am getting to know more and more about the people around me.

Walking my dog takes longer because everybody says hello and maybe stops for a quick chat (at a distance), maybe this has always been the case but with more people at home right now I guess our dogs are getting more walks than ever before!

I have had notes through the door offering help with shopping, phone calls to check I am ok. It seems to me to have made us all a little kinder, and wouldn't that be a fine thing to be

left with at the end of all of this worry.

Thankyou to all my neighbours who have offered assistance or greeted me with a smile when out and about.

I am fortunate that I have a large family who look after me when I need it, but it is all much appreciated. Take care of yourselves and your families and let's continue to make Chelsfield a happy place.

Bridget O'Donnell

A Message From Councillor Mike Botting

Dear all,

Whilst I know that some of your groups have actively been working to identify elderly, vulnerable and at risk members of your community during these uncertain times I wanted to signpost you to the Council Website and in particular the information in respect of Covid-19. The information can be found at;
https://www.bromley.gov.uk/news/article/1551/corona_virus_covid-19_%E2%80%93_what_you_need_to_know

Can I please draw your

attention in particular to the section on volunteering and Scams.

Angela, Samaris and I wish you all a safe journey through the coming months. The council Website will be updated as new information comes to light and I ask that you all pay attention to it as well as the many other sources of information becoming available over the coming days. Unfortunately we all know that the less scrupulous members of society will attempt to make a profit out of other people's fears and vulnerabilities so we must

all ensure that it is not only the medical health of our communities that we collectively try and protect but also their mental and financial health.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your attention.

Kind Regards

Mike Botting

Councillor for Chelsfield & Pratts Bottom (including Green Street Green)

Tel: 07976-280511

Mike.Botting@bromley.gov.uk



**Chelsfield Village Hall,
Bucks Cross Road, BR6 7RL
Box Office-07816 505448
www.ticketsource.co.uk/chelsfieldplayers**



**The Chelsfield Players
presents**

**FUNNY
POST
MONEY**

**Thurs 2nd- Sat 4th April
8pm-doors open .30 pm
£8.50 tickets**



**This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Concord
Theatricals Ltd on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. concordtheatricals.co.uk**

Local Food Suppliers

Hewitts Farm Our local farm shop. 07768105669. hewittsfarm.co.uk/
 Monday - Saturday 8am-9am - open to vulnerable 'at risk' & key workers only
 9am-5pm - open to the general public
 please respect our key workers and vulnerable members of the public and if you do not fall into one of these categories please do not turn up until 9am.

Orders can be made over the phone and made up for collection in the afternoon when it is very quiet. They use a contactless card payment machine and can also bring their order and card machine to your car so you do not have to get out. You can also arrange for someone who can pick it up on your behalf. We stock a wide selection of different things all year round, such as fruit, vegetables, honey, preserves, pickles, jams, fresh free range chicken and duck eggs, pet food, logs, bags of potatoes, a wide selection of luxury farm house biscuits including sugar free and gluten free and over 10 different

Elderly & Vulnerable Priority Shopping Hours	
	Thursday - the first hour of opening.
	Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9am - 10am. (except Express stores).
	Friday - from store opening until 9am.
	Monday and Thursday - the first hour of opening.
	The first hour of opening, every day.
	Monday to Saturday, 9am - 10am.
	The first hour of opening, every day.
	Check local stores.
	Check local stores.

varieties of pure apple and pear juice. A one way system is in operation to aid separation. Unfortunately Hewitts Farm are no longer able to deliver.

The following local suppliers have confirmed they are currently happy to provide a delivery service. Deliveries should

only be requested by those who are self isolating or 'at risk' as the suppliers are likely to be very busy and if over-run may have to stop all deliveries.

Holwood Farm Open Tuesday-Saturday 9.00-4.00. Please only visit singly as there is a limit to the numbers allowed in the shop at any one time.

Hewitts Farm

Court road, a224, Orpington, Kent, BR69BX

Call: 07768105669 or

Email: hewittsfarmorders@gmail.com

Website: www.hewittsfarm.co.uk

Fruit, vegetable and salad boxes!

FREE LOCAL DELIVERY

We also have a huge range of different things in the farm shop all year round; Christmas trees, preserves, pickles, eggs, logs and much more.

To place your orders today please contact us via email or telephone with the details above, or visit our website for more information



The website is currently being updated. They are setting up a click and collect service so you can order and pay online then collect by arrangement. holwoodfarm.co.uk. They have a wide range of produce from local suppliers. They are currently asking you not to phone. They are planning to use a couple of volunteers to carry out deliveries to the 'at risk' group.

Cole's Family Butcher

01689 852084. High Street, Green Street Green

Open Tuesday-Friday 9.00-4.00 and Saturday 9.00-3.30.

Watts Farm will deliver within a 30 miles radius of their depot near Maidstone. The minimum order is £50 with a £4 delivery charge or free delivery over £75. They have a huge range of goods from fruit and vegetables to toilet paper. Get together a large order with neighbours!

www.shop.wattsfarms.co.uk

Email: shop@wattsfarms.co.uk

They do not take orders over the phone.

Walk For Water - **HOLLAND**



have done our own Walk for Water in the school grounds to raise money for a small school called Amawbia in Nigeria so that they can have a fresh water supply, and a new clean sanitary block, 1 solar paneled bore hole to be drilled, toilet building for separate boys/girls, 4 tap water installations for the students. Each year the students get sponsored for the 5 mile walk circulating around our school fields. This endeavor has continued with the help of the Bromley Rotarian Society who have volunteers counting the laps the students do. 5 miles = 50 laps of the school grounds.

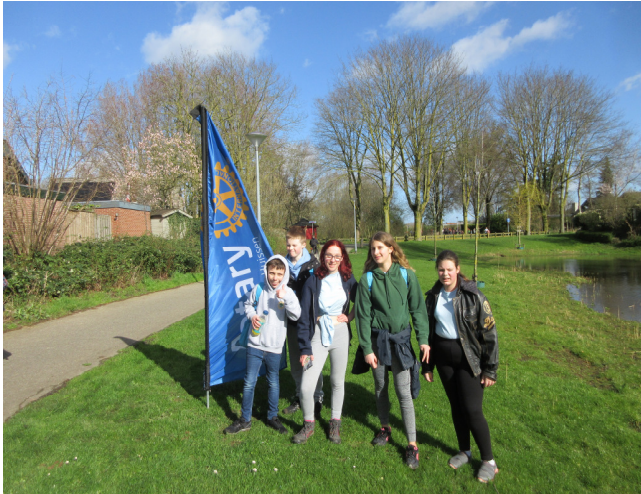
On a chilly grey day 10 students and 4 staff left the happy premises of Brown's School at 7.30 am to make our jolly way to Dover and then on to Arnhem in Holland from Calais in the school

minibus. This was the school's "First Ever" trip to Holland to join a school in Arnhem and to do the walk with them.

For the last 4 years we



We have always completed the walk for water in conjunction with the school in Holland, being able to do both walks on the same day. Whatever the school manages to collect the Rotarians guarantee to double our total. Last year we managed to gain the amazing amount of £1, 347.46 which as mentioned was doubled by the Rotarian Society



and sent to Holland. This was/is a great sum considering the school had 72 students at the time.

Why 5 miles – you may ask? This is the distance the children and/or

parents have to walk for the nearest clean water supply closest to the village, and to then fill their containers and carry them back (usually on their heads !!)

After an exhausting

passage to Arnhem (accident on the M25, 2 accidents in Belgium) we eventually managed to get to our Hotel at 6pm !! – a long drive. The next morning we transferred to our friendly school in Holland and after receiving our back packs with 6 litres of water in them (to simulate the African experience) we were off by 10am.

Walking through lovely clean woods on a sunny day does make a big difference, and allowed our students to enjoy the fabulous scenery and to embrace cool fresh air. After a couple of hours our students completed the 5 miles through rugged terrain with great gusto and weight ! I don't think I was ever happier to unload 6 litres of water after 5 miles in my life ! Thus we had completed our first ever Walk for Water in Holland with the school we have become very good friends with over the years. After a short break, from the completed walk, we were off to Doerwerth Castle as a treat, which was further enhanced in the late afternoon by a very tasty pancake with our Dutch friends at a lovely Dutch Pancake House.





After another good nights sleep we were back on the road again to “good ole blighty” – Thankfully a much easier trip home.

PS. - Unfortunately at this

time of writing our own Walk for Water has to be postponed which was due later this March (for obvious reasons) but we will be doing it as soon as possible so that we can

carry on supporting this very worthwhile charitable cause.

*Chris Ponulak
Deputy Headteacher
Brown’s School*

Friday 13th March - A Very Lucky Day!

Traditionally ‘Friday the 13th’ is viewed with suspicion and trepidation but for me ‘Friday the 13th March’ is a day that I look back on with reverence and pleasure. You may wonder why?

Friday 13 March 1970 was when a group of youngsters from St Martin’s youth club in Chelsfield (Kent) had their first bell ringing lesson at St Martin’s and two of those youths celebrated their 50 years of bell ringing by re-convening in the ringing chamber in an attempt to

ring a peal on Friday 13 March 2020.

The two ringers in question were Anne Rueff (nee Barter) and me. When we learnt to ring at St Martin’s it only had 6 bells (now it has 8).

Our peal attempt was successful and in 2 hours 52 minutes of continuous ringing we rang 5,090 changes of Cambridge Surprise Major. I feel lucky that:

- ◆ as a result of attending a talk and demonstration on bell-ringing by Andrew

Chandler (the Tower Captain at that time) to the members of the St Martin’s youth club in 1970 I gave bell-ringing a try.

- ◆ I have enjoyed 50 years of bell ringing with its trials and tribulations.*
- ◆ 50 years later I would still be ringing and for me St Martin’s, Chelsfield, is still my home tower.

* The latest stroke of luck was that our celebratory peal occurred 3 days before COVID-19 resulted in bell ringing being nationally suspended.

Back in the 1970s the hard work and commitment in training us was undertaken by Jane Spencer (nee Seaman) a very dedicated teacher who had unending patience in teaching her new recruits.

My half century of ringing has included countless ringing events: Sunday services (the primary reason for learning to ring), weddings, funerals, local and national events, practice nights, visiting hundreds of towers, including cathedrals, ringing holidays, both at home and abroad, ringing at St George's Memorial Chapel in Ypres, Belgium, helping people learn to ring, taking part in striking competitions, attending training courses, organising a ringing outing, giving talks on bell-ringing, ringing quarter peals and peals. The list is endless. Who would have thought that, from an innocuous talk at the youth club in early 1970 bell-ringing would help shape the next 50 years of my life.

You will appreciate that ringing is thirsty work so there have been a few pub visits along the way,

too.

My first peal, rung in 1972, resulted in 14 blisters. I clearly remember the pain and recall a school friend asking me why I undertook such an activity. I replied that I didn't know. I am pleased that my most recent peal didn't result in any blisters – so no excuse not to do the ironing or the never-ending housework! The band on Friday 13 March 2020 consisted of one ringer who had rung over 3000 peals and Anne has rung over 1,000 – I've rung very few.

Other youngsters who learnt to ring on Friday 13 March 1970 at St Martin's, (after attending Junior Choir practice), were Frances Willenbrock, Rosemary Body and probably Alison Thomas and Wendy Neale. Others who learnt around that time were John Doyle and later Susan Iley.

Anne's brother and sister already rang and from her recent email I quote "I was really pleased to start as Gillian and

William were already ringing, along with Felicity Mussell. I used to go out to other practices with them; also John Barnes encouraged me a lot. By the time I went to University in 1975 I had very solid roots in ringing, and there were plenty of opportunities to progress.

The great thing about ringing is you can do as much or as little as you like, often depending on personal circumstances. I really enjoy peal ringing because mostly it is the same core group of people, and there is the social aspect as well as hopefully getting good ringing".

Thank you, Anne, for keeping meticulous records which enabled you to initiate this peal attempt and for inviting me to ring with you.

So, there you have it. John Barnes was a significant influence in both Anne and my early ringing days but, my ultimate gratitude goes to Jane who trained us week after week and month after month until we were competent ringers and for whom I have undying affection. I

will never know how different my life would have been had I not learnt to ring.

Thank you, Jane.

Angela Wilkins

Kent County Association
Chelsfield, Greater London

St Martin of Tours
Friday, 13 March 2020 in
2h 52 (10–3–14 in A□)
5090 Cambridge Surprise
Major

Composed by A N Tyler
1 Ian H Oram
2 Angela Wilkins
3 Margaret E Oram
4 Anne L Rueff

5 Gwen Rogers
6 Philip Rogers
7 John B Keeler (C)
8 Claire F Roulstone

Rung on the 50th anniversary of the ringers of 2 and 4 having their first lesson in bell handling at this church.

A Letter From the Rector



ST MARTIN OF TOURS CHURCH – CHELSFIELD

Rector: Rev John Tranter

Tel: (01689) 825749

Email: rector@stmartinchelsfield.org.uk

Dear Friends,

‘Staying in Touch’ – Church Communication in a time of Crisis

On 23rd March the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England urged everyone to follow the instructions given by the Prime Minister to stay in their homes in a national effort to limit the transmission of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

‘The Church continues to be alive and active, but our buildings must close as the UK is seeing a huge increase in the number of people falling sick with COVID-19. We must distance ourselves from one another and prevent

the spread of infection in order to save lives. Therefore, as well as public worship being suspended, all church buildings in Country are now closed.’

This means that the doors of St Martin’s must remain shut but, as Bishop James reminds us, though the building may be closed the church remains alive and active. At St Martin’s we’ll be doing the following:

Worship – I will continue to pray daily on your behalf at the following times:
Sunday 10.00am Holy Communion
Monday 9.30am Morning Prayer
Tuesday 11.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 9.30am Morning Prayer
Thursday 7.00pm Evening Prayer
Friday 11.30am Holy Communion
Saturday 9.30am Morning Prayer

We’re also videoing services and posting them on our website and new YouTube channel, please check back regularly to see the latest ones (there’s a link at the end of this letter).

Weekly newsletter – we’re producing a weekly newsletter with prayers and readings, this will be available on our website.

Prayer – if you have specific prayer requests or

wish to have a candle lit in church for a suffering loved one, please provide me with brief details and I will act on your behalf.

Private Prayer – can now only be done at home. There are many resources available on the Church of England and Diocese of Rochester websites, and our social media accounts are posting daily prayers.

Magazine – we are no longer permitted to produce printed material but will endeavour to provide a magazine monthly as an email attachment to those who wish to receive it, and put a link on the website.

Please continue to share your stories and messages with us.

Our Lord’s Summary of the Law reminds us of the way forward: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength . . . Love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.”

You can call me at any time for prayer or a chat, and please let me know if you have any bright ideas about how we might develop our ministry in these difficult times. Keep safe, keep secure and

keep in touch.

Rev John Tranter

Please refer regularly to the church website www.stmartinchelsfield.org.uk for updates. If you have any pastoral needs, or are anxious and need prayer please contact Rev John at the Rectory on 01689 825749 or rector@stmartinchelsfield.org.uk

Search for Chelsfield St Martins on these social media sites to find our pages:



Rubbish Collection

Bromley Council has suspended recycling collections. Non-recyclable rubbish

and food waste will continue to be collected on the usual day but not at the usual times.

Residents are asked to store their recyclables if possible until the service

More Accidents in Court Road

More reasons why we need that roundabout!

Friday 6th March morning – Church Rd / Court Rd junction. Accident involving 4 Cars, one with considerable front damage left at scene

overnight.

Monday 9th March morning - Charterhouse Rd / Court Rd junction. Car with minor damage left in centre of Court Rd. Police at scene.

Villagers are noticing a

number of minor accidents on the Hewitts roundabout, that will often be unnoticed by the authorities. This is perhaps not helped by the poor lane markings. If you see any accidents however minor, please inform the VV.

Childhood Memories

I attended Warren Road school in Green St. Green under headmaster Edwin Stevens from 1940/1943 and recently was lucky enough to be given a copy of "Warren Road Primary School, The first 60 Years" published in 1998.

It certainly brought back memories of teachers and fellow pupils and of the school caretaker; Mr. Beatrup who, despite having the use of only one hand, was in great demand from those of us with autograph books as he always produced a tiny watercolour picture for those who asked.. Mine was of two bluebirds, and I still have it. Mr. Beatrup was our lollypop man too and looked after the underground boiler which heated our classrooms and cloakroom where hot pipes dried the wet coats.

When it opened on 11 July 1938 the school had a simple 3-sided layout with a grass quadrangle in the middle: a row of classrooms opening onto a verandah, the big school hall, finally the cloakroom and toilets. It was normal practice to leave our coats, scarves etc. on our

pegs with no fear of things being interfered with. Happy days.

I cycled to school every day whatever the weather, there was very little traffic then. In 1942 a house near the school was acquired to be used as a small canteen on the ground floor run by volunteer mothers, with two classrooms upstairs, though I never saw it as I always cycled home for a cooked lunch.

At morning break crates of a pint milk bottles appeared along with drinking straws for everyone. There was a drinking fountain available in the playground but naughty boys liked to stuff the purple berries of the Mahonia bushes growing nearby into the fountain and pretend it was poisoned!

The school was designed to accommodate 280 children but only enrolled 151 on opening in 1938. This increased to 240 by the October and to over 500 by 1948 when two brick huts were built to provide four more classrooms, plus a separate canteen.

During WWII there were many interruptions to lessons due to air raids when we all trooped out (plus our ever-ready gas masks) to the shelters on the edge of the tarmac playground. I doubt if we actually assimilated much knowledge whilst sitting on wooden benches in the dimly lit and chilly shelters but the teachers did their best until the "all clear" released us, sometimes having to respond to another warning very soon after. One Summer the roof of the school hall was badly damaged during a night-time raid. This resulted in an extension to the holidays while repairs were carried out - no complaints from us!

Pupils were able to buy 6d. (2½p) savings stamps in class on Monday mornings. There was fierce rivalry between classes to see which had the highest number of stamps bought each week. When 15/- worth (75p) had been stuck in one's savings-book it could be changed for a National Savings Certificate, thus helping the war effort.

Special 'Savings Weeks'

occurred occasionally, titled 'Wings for Victory', 'Spitfire Week' etc. and once Army vehicles appeared in the playground. Children were helped aboard and given a short run out on neighbouring roads. Flags and banners were displayed at the school entrance - it was all very exciting and hopefully encouraged us to give more of our pocket money for savings stamps.

There were more peaceful days too of course, such as lessons under the large

tree near the quadrangle on hot days, and the huge enthusiasm for our Sports Day towards the end of Summer term with all the usual races - egg and spoon, sack, three legged and measured lengths, everyone competing in something and yelling encouragement to one another.

I attended the 50th anniversary of the school opening and found it much changed with many additional buildings and swimming pool, and of course computers in every

classroom. I did not know about the 60th celebrations unfortunately but by year 2000 there were some 2,000 pupils so there would have been more changes to accommodate them. Mr. Stevens (Stevo to us all, behind his back) presided over the growth of the school for 26 years, an admirable feat. I had three very happy years there and was sorry to leave. I wonder if there are still members of my class still living in the neighbourhood?

*Pam Francis
(nee Stebbings).*

Chelsfield Players Go Digital!

Since postponing **Funny Money** to the autumn The Players have really embraced new technology. As one of our number said on the 21st

"Remember this week for a pub quiz in 2023 - Which week did the brand Zoom become a household name?"

Across the internet on laptops, phones and tablets using this platform we have been able to hold word rehearsals, committee meetings and up next are some play readings to ensure we

have an exciting programme of productions for 2021 and beyond.

In this way we get to see each other (and each other's living rooms) and generally keep the group in touch.

WhatsApp groups were already a feature of the Players for the last few years: A great way to remind people of rehearsal content and to share jokes and funnies relating to the current production. A wider group for Business and a

mirrored one for Social keeps the notices from the nonsense and as less people seem to be using email a vital way to keep the Players running.

On this last point we're looking forward to seeing you all again when this ghastly time is done. What better way to cheer yourself up than with a farce by that master of the genre Ray Cooney? Watch for posters (and online!) for dates.

We will be back.

Local History Group - Part 1

The Great Kent Atmospheric Railway

Nick Reynolds introduced us to the concept of using air pressure for propulsion.

Steam power was used as early as 1718 by Thomas Newcomen to pump water out of mines in Cornwall and steam driven pumping engines were used at the Crossness sewage pumping station in Abbey Wood from 1856 to 1865. It was also used to drive machinery in factories.

In 1808 Trevithick built a demonstration steam railway track in London. The first workable railway was constructed on an embankment from Liverpool to Manchester in 1829. In the same year George and Robert Stephenson took part in the Rainhill Trials in Lancashire. The first trial railway in South East England was constructed in 1837. It ran on tracks from London Bridge to Greenwich and the viaduct it used still exists. There were some concerns about the suitability of steam powered engines.

There were several early

pioneers of using air power for propulsion. George Medhurst, 1759-1829, patented a wind pump in 1799, an Aeolian engine using compressed air to drive road vehicles in 1800, a pneumatic despatch system in 1810 and a pneumatic railway in 1812. John Vallance built a demonstration atmospheric railway in 1824 using 6ft pipe and bearskin seals. George Pinkus of London took out several patents from 1835 including a 9ft square section pneumatic railway and a smaller bore atmospheric system with rope connections. He built a demonstration railway alongside the Kingston canal but was unable to raise the finances to proceed.

Louis Mekarshi proposed a compressed air reservoir system for trams in the 1870s and for automobiles in 1903.

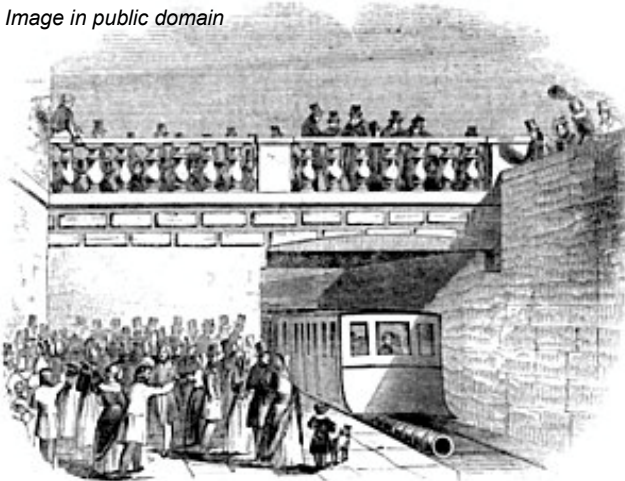
George Medhurst proposed several alternatives including an air powered truck pulling the train inside a tube, a tube with a slot along the top sealed by a leather flap and a piston drive. In 1841 Jacob and Joseph Samuda of Southwark

produced a 50 page paper outlining the advantages of the technology. There was no need for an engine to carry fuel; reduced weight so more efficient; steeper gradients could be negotiated; reduced construction costs; no smoke emissions (important in tunnels) and no risk of boiler explosions

Their ideas were patented and a demonstration system built. This led to a number of similar proposed systems and a short-lived investment frenzy. The earliest line was built at Dalkey in Ireland. This track ran from 1843-1854 over a distance of 2.8km.

Another ran at St Germain in Paris with a gradient of 1 in 28 over 1.5km from 1845- 1860. Joseph Samuda deigned a railway from London to Epsom in 1844. Crossing points presented a difficulty. The first part was constructed from Croydon to Forest Hill, a distance of 5 miles. This was extended to New Cross giving a total length of 7.5miles. A section of the pipe is on display in Croydon Museum. Plans

Image in public domain



Epsom Atmospheric and the South Devon Atmospheric. Conditions conspired against the projects. A bad winter in 1846 was followed by a long hot summer in 1847. The unreliability and high maintenance costs became evident when the pipes leaked and leather flaps dried out. The London and Croydon Atmospheric was converted to conventional motive power but the Dalkey and St Germain railways continued under atmospheric power until 1854 and 1860 respectively. The Great Kent Atmospheric Railway proposal was abandoned and the company was dissolved in 1860.

Looking at all the railway proposals for the area we can see that Farnborough had the most.

We can speculate what might have been had:

- ◆ South Eastern Railway been more co-operative
- ◆ Bromley had received a main line 20 years earlier
- ◆ The main line had been routed through Farnborough rather than Orpington
- ◆ Or a branch line built to Farnborough?

were made to extend it to Portsmouth. There was another mainline application in 1844 for a South Devon Railway. Brunel was interested in using atmospheric power. Several pumping stations survive. This one is at Torquay.

Geof Shepherd <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/deed.en>

In the mid 1840s several railway companies were

proposing direct lines into Kent, starting at Lewisham. One to Tonbridge, one to Maidstone and Canterbury, and another via Tonbridge to Maidstone and Canterbury. All three were to go through Farnborough. The proposed Great Kent Atmospheric Railway was planned to run from New Cross through Plaistow, Bromley Common, Locks Bottom, Farnborough, Green Street Green and Pratts Bottom - Rushmore Hill. Nick showed us maps of the period indicating the chosen route.

In operation or being extended were the London and Croydon



- ♦ There would have been no reason to form the East Kent Railway
- ♦ No direct line from Orpington to Victoria via Bromley
- ♦ The growth of Farnborough rather than Orpington
- ♦ The local Green Belt would have been very different.

Would we still have chosen to live in this area? I doubt it.

Summary of all Railway Proposals

	Beckenham (Junction)	Bromley	Farnborough	Orpington
1840s		3	3	
1850s	4 (2)	5	5	1
1860s	1 (1)	2 (1)	2	1 (1)
1870s		1 (1)		
1880s				
1890s		1	2	1
1900s		1	1	
1910s				
1920s			1	1
Totals	5 (3)	13 (2)	14 (0)	4 (1)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

ALL DIARY DATES ARE SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Bromley Council

Main switchboard:
020 8464 3333
E-mail: fixmystreet.com
Opening hours Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm
Address: Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, BR1 3UH

Reporting Problems to the Council

Can be reported via the council website, www.bromley.gov.uk/report, or if urgent by phone out of hours Emergency Duty Team 020 8464 4848.

Neighbourhood Watch

John Leach 07711304965.

NHS Non-Emergency 111

Chelsfield Primary School

01689 825827

BMI Chelsfield Park Hospital

Main Reception
01689 877855
Physiotherapy
01689 885920
Outpatients
01689 885905

Councillors

Mike Botting-
mike.botting@bromley.gov.uk
Angela Page
angela.page@bromley.gov.uk
Samaris Huntington-Thresher
samaris.huntington-thresher@bromley.gov.uk

Chelsfield Village Voice

chelsfieldvillagevoice@gmail.com

EDF Electrical Power Failure

Call 105 or 0800 316 3105

BT Line Faults 0800 800151

Thames Water Emergencies
0800 714614

National Grid (Gas)
Emergency (leaks) 0800 111999

Bromley Police Station & Police non emergency 101

Samaritans

Freephone 116123

Safer Neighbourhood Team

020 8721 2605
chelsfield.prattsbottom.snt@met.police.uk

Chelsfield Village Hall

(bookings) **01689 831826** or email to:

cvhlettings@gmail.com

Chelsfield Players

info@chelsfieldplayers.org