

"Some sort of periodical is an essential life-line in a village such as ours."

West Farleigh's own

LIFE-LINE

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The first, and most literal, lifeline was certainly the umbilical cord. -Anon.



Illustration of All Saints' after Harold Harbour,

Plenty of items related to our roads again this month. First the following message from Bruce Scott, Chairman of the Parish Council, who has asked Life-Line to publish this news on traffic and its regulation in the village....

"West Farleigh speed limit review update.

The members of West Farleigh Parish Council recently attended a meeting on the recommendations of Kent Highway Services following their Speed Limit Review. These new speed limits we are hoping will be implemented during 2009. The following is a brief outline of the conclusions reached from their report.

- B2010 Lower Road, between East Farleigh and Old School House reduction in speed from 60 mph to 50 mph.
- B2010 Lower Road/Smiths Hill, between the Old School House and Vale House reduction in speed from 60 mph to 40 mph.
- B2163 Ewell Lane, between the junction with the A26 to the 'T' junction of Heath Road reduction in speed from 60mph to 40 mph.

I am sure that you will see this as good news for the village and is the culmination of a considerable amount of time and effort from West Farleigh Councillors, mainly Councillor Geoff Martin and previously Paul Boulton. Our thanks are also extended to Borough Councillor John Wilson for his time, effort and determination in seeing this through."

Accident in Forge Lane, East Farleigh. Villagers will have heard that Ruth Bierbaum, Associate Rector at our five churches Benefice, was badly injured when her car overturned in Forge Lane. Ruth suffered severe damage to her hand, which necessitated her hospitalisation at the specialist unit at East Grinstead. This was the best place to cope with the great pain she was in, and to perform the operations necessary to rebuild her hand. We understand that these are considered to have been successful. The accident came at an important moment in Ruth's life, in that she was about to leave us and take up a new post, moving home and all. She will be out of action for three months, according to the prognosis, but happily she will be able to take up her position in due course.

Indeed, Ruth is insistent that the planned party to mark her departure from these parishes takes place as scheduled.—which is at Coxheath on August the 10th at 5 p.m. She may only be the "walking wounded" then but that is a lot better than looked likely at the start of the month!

Parishioners are reminded that if they wish to contribute to a leaving present for Ruth, they should pass funds to Sue O'Donnell (PCC secretary, at Campana, Charlton Lane, or Stephen Norman, treasurer, Smith's Hall). Cheques should be payable to All Saints' Church Wardens. (See page 2 for more on Ruth.) -Ed.

Hi All,

National Health Service Diamond Jubilee

July saw two significant events - one nationally and the other locally. On July 4th the National Health Service reached its Diamond Jubilee and later in the month we marked the tenth anniversary of the death of three paramedics who died in the Air Ambulance crash on July 26th. Both these events, I believe, focus our attention on those who provide us with emergency and 365/24/7 care throughout our lives, and the gratitude we owe to the men and women of the NHS.

Which one of us gathered here hasn't had some experience of the National Health Service? I can tell you that the pressures within our NHS are always great. We expect, and rightly so, to be treated according to need, yet money is limited, resources stretched and medical staff overworked.

I am a volunteer chaplain at Maidstone Hospital and was working before, during and after last year's report on the many patients who died of hospital borne infection. I believe that throughout the problems the levels of commitment and professionalism from all staff was high and patient care the best that medical staff could provide. That is not to say that things were right! However, imagine yourself working in a hospital at the centre of national media attention and people in the community losing trust in their local hospital. Remember also that this media attention came at a time when consultation was taking place about reorganising services between Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells and feelings were running high. To work in such an environment, when all around you the constant publicity was negative, was a demoralising experience for all. The criticism hurts even if the truth was sometimes misdirected. It was to the credit of staff that patients being treated in the hospital found the care they received at odds with the publicity. Chaplaincy played its part in supporting staff and reassuring patients at a time when paid Chaplaincy in the Trust was at an all time low and volunteers were doing the service. Since then the paid Chaplaincy is almost back to full strength. At the centre of the NHS are people and people trying to do their best.

The NHS always seems to be undergoing review and re-organisation. Within the NHS Ambulance Trust the Kent merger with the counties of Sussex and Surrey brought with it a sense of uncertainty and direction as the change has taken place over a very short period of time. The merger is bedding in and only time will tell if the obvious advantages of size results in better patient care. The demands on the NHS Ambulance Service have changed since the chaplaincy service started some ten years ago. No longer is the aim to transfer the patient to the nearest hospital for treatment as quickly as possible. Treatment is now provided at the scene by highly trained paramedics equipped with the latest drugs and equipment and only when the patient is stable is the move to hospital considered. The air ambulance can transfer very sick patients needing specialist treatment right into the heart of London within minutes from anywhere in the region. The Service is changing and demands increasing on all staff from those in the Control Centres to the crews on the road, to meet strict time constraints as well as providing the public with the best health care available. Chaplaincy to this service is changing with crews no longer in the station but on the road during their 12-hour shift so chaplains are increasingly going with the crew in the ambulance during their shift.

The NHS doesn't always live up to our expectations. Improvements in drugs and equipment are costly, training costs, the rapid changes in treatments, the shorter stays in hospital for treatment all place a strain on budgets. Yet at the heart of the NHS are people demonstrating their professional skills, giving of themselves in time and energy well above the call of duty and for what they are paid to do. And this is often in a climate of criticism and expectation that is misplaced and unfair.

This is our NHS Health Service today - composed of men and women dedicated as they have always been to providing the public, us, with a service that is the best. Pray for those who serve us so well. David

Ruth Bierbaum

Rev. Peter Walker writes a brief appreciation of Ruth's career, so far.

Ruth is a Maidstone girl and her parents live in Larkfield.

Ruth began her working life as a student nurse progressing to be a Registered Nurse.

Feeling called to Ordination she was trained at Trinity College, Bristol, where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree. Ruth was ordained Deacon in 1999 and Priest in 2000.

She served as an Assistant Curate in the parish of Filey, Yorkshire until 2002 when she came to be the Associate Rector of our parishes here.

Ruth soon established herself as diligent worker for the Lord and her many gifts began to blossom as her time here progressed. Ruth's gifts include her work with young people; Logos' in particular. She ran youth 'Alphas' for those youngsters who were contemplating Confirmation. 'Alpha' itself was run with others a number of times. Ruth ran a number of bible studies over her six years - 'PSST' a notable one and more latterly her 'Next Step' group for those having completed 'Alpha'.

A concern for social issues has been a hallmark of Ruth's ministry and her support of 'Make Poverty History' campaign inspired many to follow her lead.

(Continued next page.....)

Her pastoral care has been appreciated by many and this is undoubtedly one of her particular gifts which she exercises with great compassion and in an attitude of prayerful support of the many lives she has touched.

Ruth readily admits that 'administration' is not one of her gifts!

Prayer and regular bible study have been the solid foundation from which all her other work has flowed. Her teaching and preaching has always been 'bible-centred' and related to every day life. Her devotion to the Lord Jesus has been an example to us all.

Her new work as a chaplain to the mentally ill will be a continuation of all that we have mentioned above and will bring her once more into the employ of the National Health Service with whom she began her working career.

We shall miss Ruth and her contribution to the life of the five churches over the six years. The NHS's gain is our loss!

We wish Ruth a speedy recovery from her car accident and in time a fulfilling ministry with those to whom she will minister.

Parish Council. Here is an account of the Parish Council Meeting which took place on July 5th. It is based on the Draft Minutes. We recognise this may be duplicatory for many villagers, as similar extracts from the Minutes have already been published in the *Kent Messenger*, but for the benefit of those who do not buy that weekly, here are the main points of the meeting:

POLICE BUSINESS

The Clerk reported three reported crimes since the last meeting, being one burglary on Tutsham Farm when a horsebox was stolen and recovered and a wheel clamp was stolen and two thefts on Lower Road when one cast iron post box and a tractor was stolen.

• HIGHWAY AND FOOTWAY MATTERS

Following discussion on whether **Speedwatch** would be beneficial, it was **Resolved** that Speedwatch would be considered again when the speed limits come into force in 2009. It was also **Agreed** that parishioners are made aware of the forthcoming speed limits via Life-Line.

• RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

Kent Free Trees Scheme Following discussion about the Kent Free Trees Scheme that offers up to 25 trees of specific species completely free of charge it was **Agreed** that the Council does not require any trees at the present time. It was felt that the scheme should be offered to individual parishioners and the Clerk will contact Life-line to request that details are included in the next issue. (See item on the tree scheme on page 6)

- **Community Centre Working Group.** It was **Resolved** that a Working Party be set up for the Community Centre with all Parish Councillors and two parishioners as Members.
- The area where the Smith's Memorial seat is positioned adjacent to Elmscroft on Charlton Lane is to be added to Larry Johnson's maintenance rota.
- It was **Resolved** that the Parish Council would produce a News Sheet every quarter with contributions being made from each Member.

MATTERS OF REPORT

- Cllr Wilson reported on the Enforcement Meeting held at Yalding Village Hall on 30th June and also the meeting to discuss Barming Bridge held earlier that day. Cllr Wilson also reported the introduction of concessionary fares from 9.00 am and KCC's plans to introduce a Freight Transport Strategy.
- Cllr Mortimer reminded the Council that while Highways have some financial constraints small projects may still be possible or alternatively the Parish Council may wish to consider funding any smaller matters with assistance from other areas.
- Cllr Merritt reported that The Good Intent Public House had erected a new sign and the old sign has been left on the Green. The Clerk will ask the owners of the Good Intent to remove the old sign. He also reported that the litter bins no longer had bags inserted and the bins were full and overflowing. Cllr Martin offered to telephone his contact at MBC.
- The Parochial Church Council has agreed to the Parish Council having a charge of £10.00 for the hire of the church for the planning meetings based on a meeting of around 15 minutes. Members also noted the general hire prices for the church have also been reviewed and there will be an additional charge of £10.00 if the meetings exceed two hours. Members were disappointed to learn of the extra charges and the Clerk was asked to write accordingly to the PCC.
- **New Noticeboard** Members noted the new noticeboard has been delivered and Cllr Merritt reported that weather permitting it is planned to be installed outside Oliver North House in the next two weeks.
- Income received since the last meeting: Awards for All – Grant for Roundabout £6,286.00
- **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** The next full Council Meeting is on Monday 1st September 2008 at All Saints Church.. All parishioners are welcome.

EVERGREENS

The Evergreens thoroughly enjoyed their July meeting which was held at Smiths Hall. The garden was looking amazing and the weather was fine enough to have tea outside. One of our members used to live at the Hall, her parents were butler and cook, another had worked there when younger, both were pleased to be back and both thought that the garden was better than it had ever been. Lee Brayshaw, the gardener, welcomed them and invited them to look all round the gardens. We are grateful to Stephen Norman and his family for allowing us to share his wonderful garden.

We have also had a trip to Hastings on a wonderful sunny day, one of the few. We had fish and chips for lunch, some walked along the prom, some visited the Aquarium, some the Fisherman's Museum and others ate ice cream and drank tea in the sunshine! We stopped at Merriments Garden for tea on the way home. This was a very enjoyable day and we are indebted to those members who shared their cars with the rest of the members.

We have a trip on the Kentish Lady booked for the beginning of September, from the Archbishop's Palace upstream to Teston Lock and back, with lunch on board.

We are grateful to the Parish Council and KCC, via our Councillor, who have given grants to subsidise our trips and outings. The members really enjoy all that is arranged for them.

Helen Swan

SEEKERS

Seekers has had a good summer term, with about a dozen children regularly attending. We have been able to get outside onto the cricket field most weeks, for which we are very thankful.

We shall be trying to recruit new children in September as we are losing three who are moving on. We are doing our best to steer them into new Christian youth groups, either in their school or near to their homes. It is our hope that we can reach out to children who do not come from church families and to this end we plan to have a "bring a friend" evening.

On 26th June we took the children litter picking from the church, along Lower Road, up Kettle Lane, finishing on the Green with refreshment and games. We collected a couple of bags of rubbish, mainly along Lower Road.

We are still looking to taking the children out into the community in some way, maybe doing odd jobs or maybe car washing, but this will have to be on a Thursday evening so will be difficult in the winter months.

Seekers will resume on 11th September.

Sue Walsh

The Farleighs WI

Pauline Dewick showed examples of what can prove profitable in her talk to The Farleighs WI called "A Fortune in Your Attic."

There is a possibility that the WI choir may be resurrected.

Knitting sessions will resume in the Autumn. Thanks to all who contributed to the making of premature baby clothes.

Darts and whist tournaments, magic manipulation with patchwork and water colour painting classes are some of the many events arranged by The West Kent Federation WI. There will also be a visit to Great Comp Gardens to celebrate its 90th Anniversary.

The next meeting will be held on 13th August at 7.30 p.m. in The Farleighs WI Hall when Jude Abbott will talk on "The Life of a Lady Cruise Director."

Visitors and new members welcome.

Pam Clark

Open Church, not far away

A warm welcome awaits you at St John the Baptist Tonbridge Road, Watlington, open from 2pm - 4pm on Thursday 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th of August for Cream teas and home made cakes.

Why not pop in for a chat and visit this beautiful village church?

Further information from 01622 813032.

Prayer Pilgrimage for Poverty and Hope Wednesday 17th September

The Bishop of Tonbridge invites you and friends from your church to join him in this event which is taking place in St George's Church Beckenham from 7.30 till 9.30 pm.. If you would like to attend reply to Christopher Weller, Appeal Director at 2-3 Bedford Place Maidstone ME16 8JB Tel. 01892 532184 or email zanti@pipex.com. This will help with catering for refreshments afterwards.

West Farleigh	All Saints, Church Lane	
3rd August	8.00 am	Holy Communion
10th August	11.00am	Morning Worship
17th August	9.15 am	Holy Communion
24th August	11.00 am	Morning Prayer
31st August	10.30am	Benefice Service

East Farleigh

3rd August	9.15 am	Holy Communion
10th August	8.00 am	Holy Communion (bcp)
	10.30 am	Morning Prayer
17th August	11.00 am	Family Service
24th August	8.00am	Holy Communion
	10.30am	Morning Prayer

Hunton

3rd August	11.00 am	Family Service
10th August	9.15 am	Holy Communion(bcp)
17th August	11.00 am	Morning Prayer (bcp)
24th August	9.15 am	Holy Communion

Coxheath

3rd August	11.00 am	Holy Communion
10th August	9.30 am	Morning Prayer
	5.00 pm	Songs of Praise
17th August	11.00 am	Holy Communion
24th August	11.00 am	Family Service

Linton

3rd August	9.15 am	Holy Communion
10th August	8.00 am	Holy Communion (bcp)
	11.00 am	Family Service
17th August	9.15 am	Holy Communion
24th August	9.15 am.	Holy Communion

Clergy Contact Numbers:

Contact Peter Walker for Baptisms, Thanksgivings, Weddings and Funerals

Rev. Peter Walker at the Vicarage 01622 747570

Rev. David Jones 01622 741474

Last month I wrote about the Barn Owl to be seen of an evening on the banks of the Medway locally. I described how it had returned with an item of prey in its talons – which is naturally something it would expect to do several times each night as long as it has young to feed. While the prey item which we saw in its grip was rather large – it could have been a bird with a dangling wing, though any certainty was quite impossible – most of the prey of these owls is small mammals.

As it happens I know that the meadows along the river are very rich in small creatures, because about 3 years ago I set a lot of humane traps, baited to entice the small creatures, on Don Goodwin's land (and with his kind permission) precisely to ascertain what mammals lived there. I set 51 traps on two consecutive days and nights, in winter, spread over about an acre and a half of land, mostly within 50 yards of the river bank. Out of 102 possible positive results over each 24 hours there were 54 successes, i.e. over 50%. There were 3 Field Voles, 36 Woodmice, 5 Yellow-necked Mice and 10 Harvestmice. All these items are excellent food for the owls, but it was finding the Harvestmice which gave me the most pleasure. I had not trapped them before – they are not to be found in Quarry Wood for instance – and are thought of as being rather scarce or at least localised these days. The old books on mammals show them as common dwellers of wheat and other cereal fields, but this was before the days of combine harvesters, not to mention insecticide and herbicide sprays. Here they were – and I'm confident still are – in rough grassland, characterised by rather rank growth on the river banks, with cow parsley, hemlock and the dreaded giant hogweed, all of which would afford plenty of opportunity for these agile little mice to climb in search of their own sustenance. It would be unusual for one of them to travel more than about 20 yards from the centre of its territory.

They vie for the position of Britain's smallest mammal with the Pygmy Shrew (which I did not collect on the river bank but which is found locally). Alone among their tribe in Britain, Harvestmice have a long prehensile tail, do not look particularly "mousy", for they have a blunt face and a chunky silhouette, and weigh in at more than four to the ounce. So small a creature would have been all but invisible in the talons of an owl as it flew by. As long as no major development takes place on this side of the river, I think this population is pretty safe. Of course, many will be taken by the owls, but even the more apparently catastrophic danger of flooding will leave many escaping, and may sweep others downstream to where they can colonise or replenish new populations. Such an event will certainly take them further than they ever dreamed of!

© Tim Hill

BENEFICE SERVICE

Whenever there is a fifth Sunday in the calendar month, all the Parishes of the Benefice get together for a combined service, of Holy Communion. Once or twice a year it is West Farleigh's turn to host this service, which guarantees a good congregation, lusty singing and good fellowship, with refreshments afterwards. Why not come along to All Saints on August 31st (which is not the Bank Holiday Weekend)? See above for details.

Ann Jones. R.I.P.

Ann, beloved wife of Rev. David Jones died on July 3rd after a long illness, borne cheerfully. A memorial service for her, attended by many, has been held at Coxheath. She was a stalwart support for David in his ministry and throughout their long marriage. Our sympathies as part of the Benefice go to David in his bereavement.



2009?

While the Parish Council is to be congratulated on its progress with the speed limits (see page 1) it is clear there is much more to be done. In the first place (because of the limited nature of the



Highways Dept's review) villagers will wonder when some news can be expected on Charlton Lane. The fact that it is an unclassified road does not change its position as the home of the bulk of the population, so that, arguably, the need for a speed limit there is greater even than elsewhere. That this should be 30 mph or less is a view widely held on the lane and beyond.

Then we may all wonder whether the changes on the classified roads will make much difference. Careless drivers will still approach the blind spot on Lower Road by Church Lane at what they may feel is a legitimate 55 mph, or try to sweep past the Tickled Trout at a good 40 mph. Either of these speeds is too fast, especially when the authorities in their advertising emphasise the difference in outcome of accidents which occur at 40 as opposed to 30 mph. It will be unfortunate—maybe even a disaster for some — if Highways is left feeling it has done something for West Farleigh which can release it from the urgent need for more action.

We are all affected by this issue—do let us know what you think!

-Ed.

Kent Free Trees Scheme

The Scheme organised by Kent County Council offers up to 25 trees completely free of charge. All the trees are species native to the area. All you need to do is collect the trees from a designated collection point, plant them yourself and care for them as they grow. The trees that are available are Alder, Beech, Birch, Hawthorn, Hazel, Holly, Hornbeam, Oak, Mountain Ash or sandy soil hedge.

The closing date for applications to be returned is 31st October, so if you are interested do not delay, call 0845 8247 600 to obtain an application booklet that gives all the information you need to claim your free trees.

Don't forget the competition also run by KCC for a photograph of your favourite tree. Send in your photo based on the theme "Trees in Kent" to win a great prize. Entries to kentgoeswild@kent.gov.uk Closing date is 5 pm.

10th September. Further details are on the KCC website

Hire the Church

The use of a kitchen with cutlery and crockery, an overhead projector and screen, provision of chairs and tables and staging make this a very suitable venue for a wide variety of activities and events. The cost is now £30 for 2 hours and £10 for each additional hour. Contact Christine Hill, Bookings Secretary on 813019

Words of some comfort.....heard on the radio lately.

"Religion is the wound—not the bandage." (The Chief Rabbi). "Trying to pray is prayer." (Cardinal Basil Hume.)

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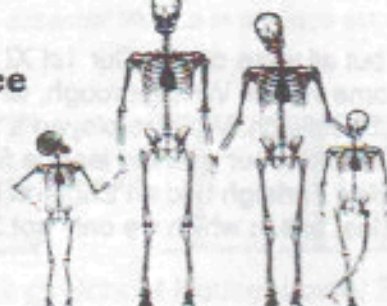
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Apparently, Lee was inspired to arrange this advertising by the picture of fly tipping, in Church Lane, on the front page of May's Life-Line. Is this a tribute to the power of advertising, or the other way round?



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Sports Report: CRICKET

A mixed bag of results last month for our cricketers, but all were close. Our 1st XI lost to Marden, Horton Kirby and Boughton/Eastwell. Our only victory came at home versus Willesborough, while our 2nd XI lost to Cobham but gained two fine victories over Hollingbourne and Sheldwich. We also played a friendly away down on the coast at Eastry in which we drew. Disappointing news about our evening league final. We played Bearsted and were set 115 to win, but after a solid and confident start Farleigh had an England style collapse half way through the innings. We still ended up needing 4 runs off the last ball in which we only got 2, hence we lost by just 2 runs. But all in all it was a terrific game.

FOOTBALL

Training has been going well and with a number of friendlies arranged for next month, football is well and truly back on the agenda. Anyone interested in coming along is more than welcome.

RINGSTEDT TOUR

Once again our merry bunch of footballers travel to Ringstedt this weekend (25th July). We are looking forward to the usual mix of football, entertainment, drinking (tea), but most of all the great hospitality and friendship which has built up over 20 years between our two clubs. A full report will appear in next month's issue (if I have recovered by then!)

Yours in sport

Tel

01622 745744

Ton up Club Winners- July

1st prize -£25 Brian Alston 2nd Prize- £15 Jonathan Beck 3rd prize -£10 Gary Reid

FRIENDS OF KENT CHURCHES SPONSORED RIDE AND WALK SEPTEMBER 13th

Last year over £116,000 was raised in Kent with over 750 churches and chapels involved. Riders and walkers will be looking for relatives and friends to sponsor them so much per church or chapel visited between 10 am and 6 pm on the day. Sponsorship forms are available from Sue O Donnell. We are aiming to keep our church staffed and open to sign the riders/walkers in and offer them a cooling drink. If you can help by manning the desk for an hour please let Christine Hill know on 01622 813019. Better still - join in the ride!

FROM THE ARCHIVES 25 YEARS AGO—AUGUST 1983

In this month Life-Line reported on West Farleigh's role in Maidstone's carnival:

"The prize that never was"

"A West Farleigh float with a community centre tableau figured in Maidstone carnival procession. Early on in the proceedings someone affixed to it an official 1st prize certificate. Happy congratulations all round of course until the float crew agreed honesty was the best policy, and surrendered it. Construction of the float was made possible by the loan of a tractor from Mr. Goodwin, and the loan of a trailer from Mr. Morlock."

And also on the house "Saxtons" in Lower Road:

"The old barn in the forecourt of the Old Vicarage has been converted into a dwelling, and is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Burkart. What a happy idea to give it the name of Saxtons, and so perpetuate its connection for sixteen years with a much loved vicar of this parish who loved to potter within and around its walls!"

The freighter for bulky items will be by the Green on Sunday September 14th from 13.30—15.15

Rochester Cathedral Service: Our 5 parishes are to be prayed for at the morning service in the Cathedral on Sunday August 31st. We are invited also to attend the sung Evensong at 3.15pm. Members of our congregations are encouraged to attend. It's the same day as our Benefice Service in All Saints.

N.B. The 19th Aug. is an earlier deadline than usual. We aim to publish the next Life-Line by about August 25th.