

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

West Farleigh's own

LIFE-LINE

Editors: Tim & Christine Hill of School House, Lower Road.

Email: tim_and_chris@btinternet.com

"Don't treat a lifeline as a pipeline; that's like crying wolf." - Anon.



Illustration of All Saints' after Harold Harbour.

Distributed freely in November 2010 Edition No. 416

Petition against Wind Turbine Presented

The opposition to the proposed wind turbine on Castle Hill has shown its strength in various ways over the last month. The last meeting of East Farleigh Parish Council was heavily attended — apparently exclusively — by opponents of the scheme. That Council has come out against it, in line with campaigners' wishes, but, as it has little power, the decision (and then not even perhaps the final one) rests with the Borough Council. It is not known when the planning meeting will take place, but the Campaign, headed by Mrs. Mary King of Gallants Lane, is making the proper arrangements to address the planning meeting. The petition, which was lodged with the Authorities on October 6th, has gathered an impressive 313 signatures, of which a considerable number was from West Farleigh. It is clear that votes for councillors at several levels are at stake over this issue. -Eds

"REMEMBER, REMEMBER, 5TH NOVEMBER"

Firework Display

The great day grows close and it's practically your last chance to get your tickets for the mammoth firework display and bonfire which will take place off Charlton Lane, on the proper day, Friday 5th November.

Children, have you made your guy?

Have you entered the competition for the best one?

Ring 07510 896616 for tickets - £6 adults, bargain family tickets £17. (2 adults and 3 children).

Displays and refreshments.



NEW FOOTPATH

The village has another 80 yards or so of footpath, created in the interests — above all — of safety. The extension to KM21 takes ramblers down almost to Teston Bridge without their need to walk on the busy and unpaved roadway. It has been funded with the help of a £1500 grant through Cllr. Stockell. It is a "permissive" path, courtesy of Rookery Estates, and it is surprising what a difference it makes to be walking inside the field/copse boundary as opposed to on the B2163, to the right of our picture. It's still necessary to be careful when emerging, of course.....
-Eds

Deadline for December Life-Line is November 22nd

This month's pastoral letter comes from Rev. David Jones

Hi All

"Remember how fleeting is my life!" Rather a morbid thought as we get older, yet those words from Psalm 89 v 47 bring life and its meaning and purpose to the forefront in our thoughts. November is a 'remembering' month in so many ways. The changing of the clock reminds us that winter is not far off. The old rhyme, "Remember, remember the 5th of November...", the mists and large piles of leaves collected by the road sweeper on my way to school, and the daily bonfires and resultant smoke they created when lit. And finally the haunting sound of the Act of Remembrance at the Cenotaph, of marching feet and the singing of "O God our help in ages past" and the last post.

Remembrance is part of life. We learn from the past and recall sad and happy moments and reflect on the experiences that have formed our lives. In one sense it is looking back, and if that is all then we remain in the past with memories and the older we get those memories can well be tinged with regret. But memories can inform us of the opportunities we have been given and which are still open to us.

In the Bible the children of Israel were reminded over and over again of their past. How their forefathers experienced God on their journey to the promised land, of slavery, of famine, and also of God's goodness to them when they followed his commands. Remembering was a way of being certain about the present and having confidence in the future in the ways that God had dealt with his people in the past. It's too easy to forget what we learn from the past. When we do that, life can become so uncertain and unsure.

So for me, Remembrance Sunday reminds me of so much that war brings, and leaves us with, in terms of suffering and pain, and so often brings little of the peace that we fought to bring about. It reminds us of the futility of so many of our actions when we put our trust in ourselves and not in God. We hear the words 'Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.' Yet sadly their sacrifice given for us is not learnt. Remembering includes 'learning and applying', so this year as we stand for those two minutes out of the just over half a million minutes in a year, stand to remember what we have done or are doing to bring about the peace in the world we long to live in.

David

"Friends of All Saints"? Looking at the experience of other parishes.

Many local parishes have bodies which support their church building without necessarily embracing the implications of regular worship there. It has been suggested that West Farleigh should have such a group which would raise money in order to preserve All Saints (a building and surroundings of great architectural merit and historical significance) and which would be open, especially, to non-worshippers or members of other religious groups.

Edward Ralke of Yalding has sent us notes which describe some aspects of the formation of the Friends of Yalding Church. He tells us:

"Yalding Church Tower was showing serious signs of instability about 1995 because the spiral staircase was subsiding. The project to stabilise the staircase was estimated at about £750,000, so there was a crisis. The PCC organised a meeting to which they invited everybody but particularly made their pitch to people who were not regular church goers but were nevertheless generally in favour of having a working church in the village. A committee of about half a dozen people was formed. It wrote a constitution and registered as a charity with the Charity Commissioners. The committee also organised a mailshot soliciting one-off and, especially, covenanted donations. We have found the covenanted donations particularly useful since they continue after the initial impulse! The tower staircase project eventually received substantial lottery funding which made it possible to save it. The Friends and the Church would probably not have been able to do it without the lottery, but nor perhaps would the lottery funding have been forthcoming without the demonstration of wide support...."

"We had many events at the time of crisis. Since then we have made regular revenue from various dramatic productions in the Village. I think these productions would have taken place anyway. However, I suspect that it is good for ticket sales that we can ascribe a worthwhile recipient for the profit, and it is quite likely that people are more inclined to come to a performance with a sensible ticket price than they would be if it were obviously cheap."

"We have now practically exhausted the monies we have collected so far and we are contemplating a new mailshot appeal."

It is clear that Yalding has benefited in many ways from the activities of the Friends. What of West Farleigh? There is perhaps no crisis of an acute financial nature facing the PCC at the moment, but it would be good to have the foundations of a supportive body in place before the crisis, that is certain to arrive eventually, does arrive. Who would like to help form such a body? Perhaps the forthcoming questionnaire could form an occasion for some persons to make the first tentative forward steps?

Eds.

Letters to the Editors. Life-Line welcomes letters from its readers. This month we have one from the present Chairman of the Parish Council (in reply to a letter published in our September edition, no. 414), and one from his predecessor.

Dear Editors,

Re: Horses at Tutsham Farm.

We, as the Parish Council, are also saddened by what is happening at Tutsham Farm, not however on what you are doing or trying to achieve regarding Team Tutsham but by the continual complaints regarding traffic generated from those activities entering via Mill Lane, which has increased many times over. This, if you had attended any of our meetings, you would have seen for yourselves from Parishioners raising their objection to this volume of speeding traffic and their fears as to the safety of people using the lane to walk, which as a public footpath is their entitlement.

The residents are also fearful of future developments that could take place within the curtilage of the Farm, again as to any increasing vehicular movements but not to the developments themselves which have certainly improved the farm outlook. As suggested previously, the easiest way forward to stop these complaints would be to close the entrance gate to Mill Lane with just restricted use, and to make Hunt Street the main entrance for which it is better suited in order to take traffic flows.

We do not normally visit unless an invitation is issued and as you state at the end of your letter "Tutsham Farm is not open to the general public*". Normally with people moving into the village and carrying out new activities they come and introduce themselves and let people know as to what is their intention. By doing it this way you can listen to any fears that people have and hopefully get their support for any worthwhile projects.

For the record we the Parish Council meet every two months in West Farleigh Church, with our next meeting being on the 15th November at 19:30 pm. All are welcome to attend and normally there is 15 minutes set aside at the beginning to raise any points from the public that involve the Parish.

If you would like a visit by the Parish Council please give our Chair, Bruce Scott a call on 814476 to arrange it at a mutually convenient time.

Yours etc.

Bruce Scott. West Farleigh Parish Council

* This is of course true, but most parishioners will also be aware of the network of public rights of way (footpaths) which crosses the farm. -Eds.

Dear Editors,

I am writing with regard to the destruction of the small tree plantation by the side of Church Lane between the Cricket Pavilion and Lower Road. I planted those trees personally on the occasion of the Millennium in November 1999, firstly to further enhance the beauty of that corner of the village and secondly as my legacy to West Farleigh, having spent over 30 happy years living and farming here.

I knew that the trees would be seen and enjoyed by many people in future years, especially as the old trees growing close to the fence in Church Lane are coming to the end of their lives. In fact one of them is diseased and is due to be removed in the fairly near future and as they go the trees in my plantation would be visible in all their glory. Among the species I planted were Walnut, London Plane, Horse Chestnut, Field Maple, Lime and Norway maple— all specimen trees. When I planted them I made sure that they were well planted, staked, tied and rabbit-guarded and looked after the first few years to ensure good establishment.

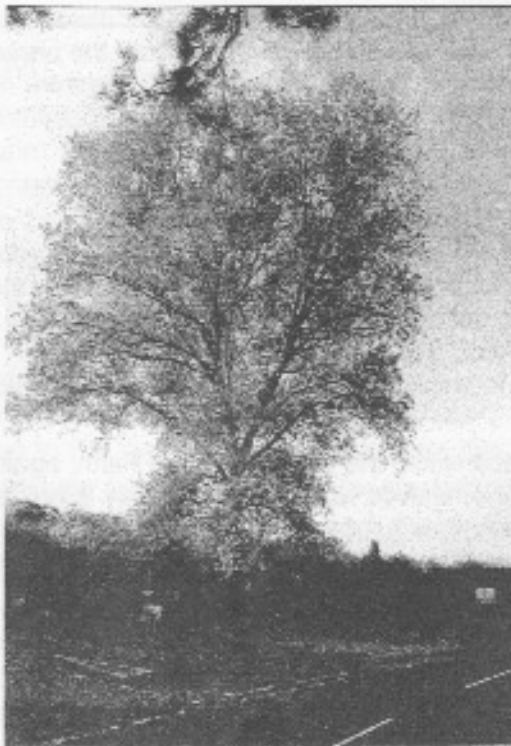
Once they became established I asked Maidstone Borough Council if they would put a Tree Preservation Order on them in view of their significance to West Farleigh and to ensure their future safety. This order was made.

Unfortunately in 2005 I had to have open heart surgery and in view of the seriousness of the operation and at my age (at that time I was 76) I realised that I could no longer carry on farming and I had to sell the land which was purchased by Rookery Estates. You may imagine my distress when I heard contractors employed by Rookery Estates destroying my precious plantation— this despite the Tree Preservation Order which apparently counted for nothing. When I asked why they were doing this they replied it was for a car park. I was told further that it was for the Cricket Club. On enquiry I was assured by a senior Club member that they neither wanted it nor needed it.

So my beautiful plantation had been destroyed for nothing. However, all is not lost and there is no reason why those trees should not be planted in the same place by the same number and species as those that have been destroyed. Only by doing this can my original purpose be restored and fulfilled. As John Keats put it: "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever"

A car park?

Don Goodwin Court Lodge Farm



Mystery Tree: here is another picture of last month's mystery tree. It is of course the large poplar at the bottom of Kettle Lane. It is arguably the most important tree in the village because it is seen by so many people each day as they go to and from Maidstone. Its large bulk seems to fill half the sky when one is heading eastwards. It forms an emphatic start or conclusion to the parish at this point and would be greatly missed should it ever fall.

If anyone would like to nominate another landmark tree we would be delighted to publish their choice. -Eds.

Parish Finance in Straitened Times

This month Life-Line (or at least those copies which are distributed to homes within the parish) once again includes the coloured sheet which gives the official news from the Parish Council. It makes reference to finance, without dwelling on the difficulties facing local government through national fiscal retrenchment. (This comes, we should remind ourselves, in the case of Kent County Council, on top of huge losses incurred through lending to Iceland.) One danger for us in a small parish is the slated reduction by three quarters of the system of small grants from the Borough and the County. These were often more-or-less at the discretion of the interested councillor, and went towards many aspects of parish life—churchyard (graveyard) maintenance, playgrounds and the like, and if they simply disappear we shall feel their loss.

Their visibility, it must be said, was not helped by the obscure names which they bore. Cllr. Paulina Stockell's contribution to the footpath works (see page 1) was through her "Member's Grant". "Concurrent Functions" is one other strange heading by which money is given to worthy local causes. (No doubt it once meant something literal - "actions going on at the same time"?) So we should remember that when councils talk of reducing "concurrent functions" they are actually talking about hard cash for those small projects which enhance local life. -Eds

EVERGREENS

At the last meeting of the Evergreens there were many reminiscences of where we were and what we were doing 60 years ago. Some of us were still at school but many were working. One of our lady members was a clipper on the London buses. What surprised us was that she was paid the same as her male colleagues - very unusual at that time, the Equal Pay Act not coming in until the early 70's. Some rather naughty, if not wicked, pranks were described. (No names, no pack drill). Another of our members brought along a photo of himself in drag, or rather himself in his mother's beach robe after a swim, very fetching. Another member had just moved to the village, into the house she still lives in.

Everyone had something to say or a photo or artefact (including a sporan) with which to interest the party. It was a very enjoyable and fun afternoon. Our afternoon teas are always popular - especially the sandwiches, made every month, by Betty Underdown. The egg sandwiches are particularly popular! Thank you Betty.

The next meeting will be at Appledore, Charlton Lane on Tuesday 9th November at 2.30 p.m. Helen Swan

Dandelion Time is having a Christmas Fair at Elmscroft on Thursday 25th November - just a month before Christmas between 5pm and 9pm. Please come and visit Elmscroft for a shopping experience; local artisans will show beautiful displays of home made food

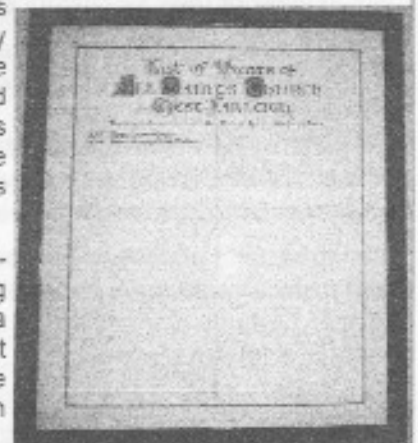
and chutney, Christmas cards, fresh water pearls jewellery, children's clothes, lovely chocolates, scarves and handbags, home made soaps etc. It will be a lovely cosy evening in preparation for Christmas where you will find that special gift. We will provide art and craft for children. Entrance fee £2.00 for adults, £0.50 for children. Please come with your friends to support Dandelion Time and enjoy a unique and cosy Christmas Shopping experience.

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Board of Incumbents

Here is a picture of the new Board of Incumbents which now hangs alongside the old one (of which it is a close copy) just inside the door to the church. It was produced by hand on special paper to match the old one and has just the two names of the current and previous rector on it. It is brilliantly "illuminated" in red, blue and gold. It is anticipated that it will take many years to fill the board—but not the 800 years it took to fill its predecessor!

Because of its historical interest, the cost of making the board was met by a grant from "Concurrent Functions" for which we are grateful to Councillor Brian Mortimer (see above).



Church Services November 2010

West Farleigh All Saints, Church Lane

7th November	8.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
14th November	10.45 a.m.	Remembrance Day
21st November	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
28th November	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion

Elsewhere in the Benefice:

East Farleigh

7th November	9.30 am.	Matins
14th November	8.00 am.	Holy Communion
day	10.30 am	Remembrance Sunday
21st November	9.30 am.	Holy Communion
28th November	8.00 am	Holy Communion

Hunton

7th November	11.00 am.	Family Service
14th November	10.50 am.	Remembrance Sunday
21st November	11.00 am.	Morning Prayer
28th November	11.00 am.	Holy Communion

Coxheath

7th November	11.00 am.	Holy Communion
14th November	10.30 am	Remembrance Sunday
21st November	11.00 am.	Holy Communion
28th November	11.00 am.	Family Service

Linton

7th November	9.30 am.	Holy Communion
	3.00 p.m.	Bereavement Service
14th November	10.00 am.	Remembrance Sunday
21st November	8.00 am.	Holy Communion
28th November	9.30 am.	Holy Communion

Clergy Contact Numbers:

Contact Peter Walker for Baptisms, Thanksgivings, Weddings and Funerals

Rev. Peter Walker at the Rectory 01622 747570

Rev. David Jones 01622 741474

N.B. Peter's day off is Monday; David's is Friday.

Nature Notes— A big year for Autumn Arrivals?

The calm but cold weather at the beginning of the past week has brought a great surge in sightings of a sought-after bird—the Waxwing. I have not yet seen any myself but I hope to do, for unusually large numbers have been reported all the way from north-east Scotland to Kent itself. The Waxwing is a stocky bird, of starling size. It is smart and debonair in appearance, creamy beige, with a black chin and eyestripe, a prominent crest, and (most strikingly) yellow on the tail and wings, where there is also the small but conspicuous block of sealing wax red which gives the bird its name. The birds come from Scandinavia, or further east, and arrive at this time of year, as part of the mass migration that takes place each autumn. It is not every year that Waxwings arrive in numbers. Why should there be this great variation in numbers coming here? If there is sufficient food in Scandinavia they will stay there and over-winter. Thus one can conclude that this year there are insufficient berries there. But the insufficiency could be the result not of a failure of the berry crop but of exceptional numbers of Waxwings themselves, thanks to a very good breeding season. On this view, they simply leave because they are "too many".

When they get here, Waxwings eat rowan berries—also their favourite food in Scandinavia – and many other types. What makes them particularly conspicuous is their liking for "exotic" fruits, such as are found in gardens and in plantings around developments such as business parks, supermarkets and the like. Many were to be seen a few years ago, during the last really big invasion, on the roadside plantings on the dual carriageway of the A288 north of Snodland. An individual Waxwing has been known to eat up to 1000 cotoneaster berries in a day—which is towards twice its own weight. As they usually go around in small flocks they can make quite an impact on the berry stock. Keep an eye open for them in such places!

Whereas Waxwings only occur in numbers occasionally, many other winter visitors reliably arrive en masse.

Classically, the entire population of some geese species (or sub-species) moves out of the Arctic and into Britain, though not into our parish. We do get large numbers of Fieldfares and Redwings here every year. Like geese, but unlike Waxwings, they are unable to stay over winter in most of Scandinavia, for they take animal food for much of the winter. These birds will be here any day now. Thrushes and Blackbirds from northern Europe are already here, but are hard to distinguish from our own "resident" birds. So too are our most minute winter visitors, the Goldcrest. My wife and I saw some arriving on the coastal marshes of north Kent a couple of weeks ago, and noted increased sightings in Quarry Wood. They are always to be found there, but last winter greatly reduced their numbers in Kent and I saw few in the woods in the summer. Now there are more around – perhaps after a good breeding season in Scandinavia. Let's hope this winter is kinder to them than the last one!

© Tim Hill



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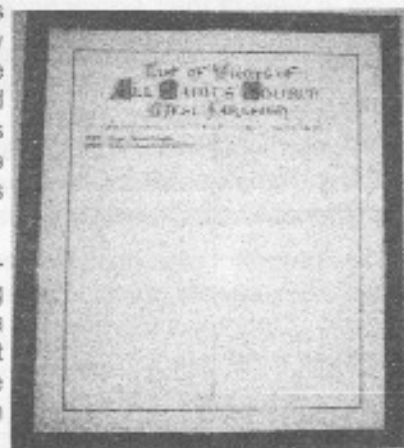
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Junior Sport

The u10's have played 2 games this month. The first was against a strong Pilgrims side. West Farleigh dominated the start of the game and deservedly went ahead. Pilgrims replied shortly after with an exquisite strike and then went 2-1 ahead just before half time. Pilgrims dominated the second half but some resolute defending and goalkeeping prevent them from scoring any more goals. The second match was against Wittersham. This was a much improved performance and West Farleigh took the lead after 5 minutes. The game was fairly even until the last five minutes when West Farleigh scored two more goals to win the game 3-0. The 11's played two matches, losing 6-1 away at Smarden and 5-3 at home against Rye Bay.

The u12's also played two matches, losing 6-2 away at Smarden and winning 1-0 against Smeeth and Braborne.



Ian Wratten

FARLEIGHS' WI

Farleighs' WI met to enjoy their Annual Show and Quiz. Members were invited to submit entries in any of the five categories in art and craft and home economics. The standard this year was extremely high and the quiz gave us plenty to think about.

Future events include the 2nd part of a Diploma in "Speaking with confidence", "Creative computer" classes and a "Learn to play whist" experience.

The next meeting on 10th November at 7.30 will include an introduction to Tai Chi and Chi Kung at Farleigh's WI Hall in Forge Lane, East Farleigh. Members and visitors will be warmly welcomed.

For further information on Farleighs' WI ring Ann White on 07850 565676

A.W.

Farleighs' History Society

The final meeting of the Farleighs' History Society this year is on Thursday 2 December at the Bull, Lower Road, East Farleigh at the usual time of 7.30 pm. We are lucky to have Mick Lynn and Geoff Doel to give us an illustrated talk with slides and music on 'A Kent Christmas'. Mick and Geoff are well known musicians and will be entertaining us with stories and songs about the way Christmas has been celebrated in Kent through the centuries. Entry for members is free and guests welcome at £2.50 on the door. This includes seasonal refreshments. Enquiries to Jenny Finch 01622 726312

J.F.

BIRDS AND YOUR GARDEN

East Farleigh Gardening Club

Autumn Meeting

The Church Hall

Thursday November 11th 7.30 pm for 7.45 pm

An illustrated talk on birds and their relationship with gardens and allotments.

Common garden visitors in East Farleigh and how to attract them.

Surprising (even shocking) things you didn't know about our feathered friends!!!

by Ray Morris MSc (Ornithology)

SPONSORED WALK AND TREASURE HUNT

SUNDAY 7th November

Depart 9.30-10.30 am from The White House

5 mile walk through Yalding

Hot soup on the return

Look for Clues on the way

£5 entry for those over 14 years

Registration and Sponsor forms available at the bar.

In aid of Buttercups Sanctuary for Goats and The Old Folk Four



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- Loft Conversions

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For appointments or 24hr emergency cover, telephone 01622 743888

Sports Report:

Football: A mixed bag of results for our 1st X1 last month with two victories and two defeats. Our victories came early on, first a 3 - 2 win over Aylesford and then a fine away victory over Wittersham, again 3 -2 (after extra time) in the Kent Junior Cup. Next came Hunton Reserves in the Tunbridge Wells Cup, losing 1 -0, and finally a result to forget, being thumped 7- 1 by TR-Sports. There were plenty of goals in our three 2nd XI games last month, resulting in two defeats and one victory. First came R.K.P. United, losing 6 -2 after extra time in the Benevolent Cup, and another cup tie, going all the way this time, losing to Rusthall Reserves 6 -4 after extra time in the Tunbridge Wells Cup. Finally another ten goal thriller, this time beating Sutton Saints 7-3 in the league. Good news in our 2 Veterans matches last month, our team beating Shooters Hill 4 -3 and gaining a terrific 6 -1 victory over the Chartham Real Stars.

Club News: Our forthcoming Race Night will be on Saturday 13th November at East Farleigh Church Hall. Please support your team if you can. Tickets are £5 and the evening kicks off at 7.30 p.m.

Yours in sport

Tel 01622 745744

Ton-up Club Winners: October

£25 Terry Ayears

£15 Peter Baggott

£10 Dave Brown

Anyone wishing to join would be more than welcome – only £10 per year!

Harvest at All Saints: About 50 people participated in the harvest supper held this year on October 9th.

The church was beautifully decorated and the evening so mild that the heating had to be turned off (!). Thus the ambience was warm and friendly as the diners tucked into the supper (with hot potatoes ferried in from Smith's Hall). Whether the quiz* was exactly a "hot potato" is another question, but in spite of some difficult conundrums alarmingly high scores were achieved. The winning team was led by the Rector: was it called the "Rector's Renegades"? Counting the raffle it is thought that nigh on £400 was raised for church funds. There are rumours that the format of the two-course supper and written quiz is so popular that it will become an annual event...

The gifts of food for the harvest festival have been distributed to the Maidstone Women's Refuge and the Christian Day Centre. Thanks are due to all who donated food and raffle gifts and otherwise helped by baking pies, setting up, serving and washing up, and decorating the church.

* Answers to Quiz pre-amble from October's Life-Line

1. S is the commonest initial letter because it combines with more other consonants than any other letter, e.g. "St", "Sh", "Sq", and multiple consonants, such as "Str", "Scr" etc.
2. B is the commonest initial letter for English place names—with the proviso that names starting "Saint" are excluded.
3. Time is the most frequently occurring noun in the English language.

Reputedly Authentic Put-down Lines. No. 10

Dorothy Parker is famed for her acid wit, of which this is a good example. A younger actress motioned Dorothy through a door ahead of herself, foolishly saying "Age before beauty". Dorothy cracked back, as she entered, "Pearls before swine!". Opportunity for us to use this line could well occur, but it may be better not to. The origin of the quotation is certainly biblical, but its use may not exactly be Christian. -Eds.

As we go to press, the horses or ponies normally to be found in Cornwallis' fields off Yalding Hill have once again been making a nuisance of themselves. First they broke through into lower fields off Ewell Lane where they caused problems with the little ponies at Dove Cottage. Later, they have trespassed in a southerly direction, onto the Devenish lands. This is a repeat of previous excursions. We understand the owners, who do not live very locally, are presently in Belgium. Maybe the horses somehow heard this worrying news, and consequently sought to make themselves scarce. More likely, of course, it is merely that they are seeking greener pastures.

The problem is, however, a serious one, which needs better fencing to resolve it. The police again had to be called in on 26th October. -Eds

Next Freighter visit to the village is December 11th. 14.20—15.05 hrs at the Green.

West Farleigh Parish Council Newsletter

October 2010

The Parish Council intends to issue this newsletter on a quarterly basis. Its aim is to inform you on some of the different topics that are discussed at Council meetings. Should you have a particular subject you feel that requires further explanation and would be of interest to the rest of the village please let us know through any of the Councillors.

Update on Vacancy for Parish Clerk

As you are aware by now the position of Parish Clerk was advertised due to Vikki's resignation due to health problems. We had received nearly forty replies for the position and short listed three candidates to attend interviews which took place from the 23rd September on. All the candidates interviewed had experience as a Clerk working for other Parishes within Kent at the time.

The candidate that we selected was Amanda Broadhurst, who is the Clerk for Harrietsham and has also got the vacancy at Barming Parish Council. We are sure that you will welcome her to the Parish of West Farleigh, and is due to attend her first Parish Council meeting on the 15th November.

Proposed Community Centre

We are expecting to give every householder in the village a copy of the questionnaire for the proposed Community Centre. We would ask you to spend a little time answering the questions to the best of your knowledge so that we can accurately gauge your feelings as to the proposal. The intention is that you will be given a couple of weeks in which to fill them in before they are collected back in. We will then have an open meeting at the Church in which to go through the findings.

Along with the Community Centre questionnaire there will be another one from West Farleigh Church as we said that we would deliver these when we sent out the one from the Parish Council. If you would again fill this short form in it will be collected when we come round for the Community Centre questionnaire.

Parish Precepts

A Parish Precept is a local tax levied on the people who live within our case West Farleigh, and is to be used to pay towards the upkeep of the village. It is collected via your Council Tax and the sum paid by Maidstone Borough Council to the Parish. This tax is discussed each year at a meeting of the Parish Council in front of whoever attends and the decision is taken on what we need to do in order to balance the books in the forthcoming year. Last year we increased the collected sum to £10,000-00p an increase of 5% or an actual increase of £0.61p per year on the equivalent Band D property in West Farleigh or just over a penny per week.

As you are no doubt fully aware that everyone is having to cut services in order to save money. We are being warned already that the monies we receive in order to maintain West Farleigh will be cut. The question is that should we keep our precept at present levels and accept that what we can do will be reduced or increase the precept sum and continue with our work. Your feedback would be appreciated on your views regarding this matter and on what you feel that we should be doing.

Planning Applications

The following is meant to give you an idea as to how the Parish Council arrives at its recommendations regarding planning applications it receives from Maidstone Borough Council

- Planning meetings are called when we have applications pertaining to development/ improvement within the Parish. These are sent through from Maidstone Borough Council on every application that is made. These have a time limit set for the responses from the parish to be made.

- The Church is hired normally on a Wednesday evening and notice of this event is publicised on our village notice boards with a list of applications to be discussed at least seven days prior to the meetings.
- The meetings are public and open to all to attend. This is where we normally receive support or objections to the particular application from parish members. This makes our job a lot easier as we can gauge first hand peoples feelings.
- The other way is for the public to approach/call one or more of the councillors and pass on their feelings. This is then brought to the planning meeting and again assists in our decision making.
- Without input from the public we will deliberate on our decision making and make our limited recommendations to MBC.

We can only respond within the Boroughs guidelines/rules and have to be able to justify our views based on the strategies and policies that Maidstone set out, and not on our likes or dislikes

The reply to Maidstone has to come under one of the following headings :-

- We do not wish to object/comment.
- We wish to see the application approved and request the application is reported to Planning Committee.
- We wish to see the application approved but do not request the application is reported to Planning Committee.
- We wish to see the application refused and request the application is reported to Planning Committee for the reasons set out below.
- We wish to see the application refused for the planning reasons set out below but do not request the application to be reported to the Planning Committee.

Therefore as you can see from the above without people letting us know their feelings we have to go with our knowledge and experience. It is obviously imperative that that there is an onus on you to let us know as we do not have time to go around the village on every application asking for your views.

Charlton Lane Speed Limits

This continues to be one of our hot topics and we are still trying to get this re-assessed, but with the latest round of Government cuts it could be a hard battle. One thing that would no doubt help us to fight this would be a local residents action group that could promote the stupidity of this 60 mph speed limit through an area where children play on the village green and most of our villagers live. If you are interested in trying to help especially if you live in the upper part of Charlton Lane then please contact our Clerk Amanda Broadhurst who will put you in touch with the group of local residents fighting for this cause.

Please remember that we cannot do anything without you telling us as we are not always about!. Therefore why not come along to the next Parish Council meeting on the 15th November at the Church in order to meet your councillors and get an insight into the way in which the parish council works and the subjects that are dealt with. You will be most welcome and you can have your say at the start of the meeting.

Cllr. Geoff Martin	01622 812189
Cllr. Deborah Bailey	01622 721671
Cllr. Beverley Hards	01622 721181
Cllr Jill Morgan	01622 726251
Cllr. Bryan Merritt	01622 813990
Cllr Larry Johnson	01622 812580
Cllr. Bruce Scott	01622 814476
Clerk Mrs. Amanda Broadhurst	01634 681685
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