

Lindfield *Life*

Inc. Scaynes Hill & Walstead

Local village talk,
by the village

August 2016 Issue #89

Free

A photograph of a baby sitting in a grassy field. The baby is wearing a white cardigan and a white top. In the background, several people in white cricket uniforms are visible on a green field, suggesting a cricket match. The scene is outdoors with trees and buildings in the distance.

Dramatic Club anniversary year

page 38

Lindfield's former Reading Room

page 18

Merv's marvellous machines

page 24

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EDITORIAL

By David Tingley, Editor

I am sat in 27 degree heat and, do you know, I think it might finally be summer!

This is a bumper edition of Lindfield Life I am pleased to say. It's mostly because you lot - the good people of the village - have been up to so much!

Loti Jackson's running challenge is described on **page 5**, **Tabitha Bird** takes to the boxing ring on **page 6** and **John Ballinger** pedals for 100 miles later in the year, see **page 7**. And that's just the beginning of the mag!

Three **amazing village businesses** received awards recently and Claire Cooper brings us the story on **page 14**. Well done to **Tufnells, SWALK** and **La Touche**.

I was privileged to get a tour of what I used to know as the Social Centre a few weeks ago - all to get photos for the article on **page 18**. Claire talked to Lindfield born and bred **Kath Rusby** about the little-known **Reading Room**. It's quite an insight.

On **page 24** we catch up with **Merv Huggett**, known to many in the village. Along with friend and fellow-inventor **Pete Browne** the pair were recently featured on a BBC2 show about their 'backyard build'. There was a lot of enthusiasm around on social media when the TV show aired last month - so we are pleased to share their story on our pages here.

We received word of a couple of **street parties** that took place in the village to celebrate the Queen's birthday, and so we have featured photos on **page 28**. Please do share anything like this with us, as we love to hear about goings on be it parties, personal achievements or events to promote. Email myself and Claire to editor@lindfieldlife.co.uk

I should not forget our regular contributors too; **Jacqui Smith, Caroline Young, Cavan Wood** and **James Verrall** - thank you all.

Last plug, before I run out of lines, see **page 45** - and take your copy of Lindfield Life with you on holiday!

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NEWS

We love to hear from groups, organisations and individuals about what's happening locally. Include a photo if you can. Email your stories to editor@lindfieldlife.co.uk

Serving up success

By **Rupert Ireland**

On Saturday 18th June, eight Lindfield Primary Academy Year 4 children went to Eastbourne to compete in the County Tennis Finals. The event was held on the qualifying Saturday of the AEGON International and more than 250 schools from across the county had been involved in the lead up to the final day.

Firstly, the children participated in skill relays, designed to test hand-eye coordination, speed, agility and control. Out of the four races, Lindfield won three to take an early lead. Then four children participated in skill events, showing control serving, returning a ball, maintaining a rally and placing shots accurately on a court. The remaining four children played matches against the other schools. They worked together, building upon the successes of previous tournaments to use their strengths most effectively and earn Lindfield crucial points. The points from the skills, relays and matches were then added together and the Lindfield players were crowned county champions!

We were honoured to receive the trophy from Roberta Vinci, who is the current world number seven women's singles player and former world number one doubles player. We are already thinking about next year and hope to represent the Mid Sussex area again to have a chance to retain our title!

Photo: Mr Ireland, William Hartley, Tom Middle, Mary McDonagh, Ruby Stedman, Roberta Vinci, Jack Bannister, Lauren Manchester, Amy Bradford and Isaac O'Keeffe.



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Loti makes it to 300 miles

Lindfield's Loti Jackson has completed her aim of running 300 miles in a year to raise money for Cancer Research UK.

Loti passed the 300 mile mark as she crossed the finish line of Cancer Research's Race for Life in Brighton last month to cheers from family, friends and fellow fundraisers.

For Loti it's been a hard, emotional and inspiring journey. In 2012, aged 27 and just days before Christmas, Loti was diagnosed with an aggressive malignant melanoma on her cheek. Following two operations to completely remove it, she was given the all clear the following year.

"Loti was aware that the reason the hospital know how to treat her cancer was due to continuing research funded by the charity Cancer Research," said her mum Hilary. "Previous Cancer Research fundraisers had saved Loti's life and she couldn't thank them enough."

"No one expects to hear these words and nothing can prepare you for it," said Loti. "But thanks to Cancer Research I am still here and doing my bit to give others the chance to beat cancer."

Last year, on Loti's 30th birthday, a milestone she had wondered if she would get to see, she set herself a goal to thank previous cancer research fundraisers and contribute to the charity's life-saving work. "I came up with the crazy idea of running 300 miles in a year to raise as much money as possible for the charity," said Loti.

"I wasn't a runner so it definitely wasn't going to be easy for me!"

However, Loti has sprinted past her original target of £850 and raised more than £1,500.

"I am speechless at how generous people have been to help me smash my target," said Loti.

"In my head I really wanted to hit £1k and I've done even better! Thank you from the bottom of my heart to everyone. You have helped the fight against cancer because one day it WILL be beaten."

To read more about Loti and donate to Cancer Research visit: www.justgiving.com/lotis300miles



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Boxing fundraiser

When comes to raising cash for charity, Lindfield's Tabitha Bird certainly packs a punch!

Inspired by her dad, who battled prostate cancer, Tabitha took to the boxing ring to raise £390 for Cancer Research UK.

The fight, which was watched by guests at a black tie event at Effingham Park Hotel, was the second mental and physical challenge for Tabitha who turned 40 last year.

Tabitha explained how it all started. "Last year I hit 40 and decided that from there on I would complete a challenge for charity every year," she said.

"Last January the only running I did was for a bus – by November I had completed my first half marathon to raise money for the NSPCC!

"This year I signed up for eight weeks of boxing training with Lumpini Martial Arts club in Crawley and Ruth Ashdown (Britain's no.1 ranked fighter and WMC European Champion), finishing with a REAL boxing match!"

Tabitha's friend and fellow Lindfield school mum Lucy Saunders joined her in the training.

"But Lucy chose to fight in Brighton as we didn't want to end up facing each other in the ring!" said Tabitha, who has now hung up her boxing gloves, and is planning her next challenge – to run the London Marathon.

If you're impressed by Tabitha's challenge you can make a donation on her just giving page: www.justgiving.com/Mrsbirddoesboxing



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Lindfield dad takes on London/Surrey 100

The legacy of the 2012 London Olympics lives on in Lindfield!

Inspired by the success of the British team, father and son John and Joshua Ballinger took up cycling and have been regulars at the Preston Park Cycle Track ever since! Josh, now 12, can often be seen cycling in the village as he prepares for his racing, and later this year dad John will be taking to the roads for a 100 mile charity bike ride.

"It all started after the last Olympics when my eight year old son, Joshua, decided he wanted to be a cycle racer," said John. "We soon found ourselves at Preston Park Cycle Track." Within a year not only had John become a keen cyclist he was also a volunteer coach at the track, teaching children about cycle racing.

Keen to take on a new challenge in cycling, John has signed up for the London/Surrey 100 this year to raise funds for Chestnut Tree House Children's Hospice.

"I've never done anything like this before and the furthest distance I've cycled is the 50 miles of the Haywards Heath Cycle Ride," said John. "Although it's quite a daunting challenge to ride so far, I feel it is definitely a worthwhile cause for all the wonderful work that is done at Chestnut Tree House.

"I've been out training for the challenge and had some good friends help me along the way, including Bob White, former head of Lindfield Primary School, Ian Masters



and, of course, Josh who has been ever present to prove how fast a 12 year old can go against these old men!"

John is aiming to raise £600 for the charity. Anyone interested in sponsoring him can do so at the website: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/John-Ballinger-100

The advertisement features two images. On the left, a man in a blue shirt is painting on a canvas on an easel. On the right, a woman in a pink shirt and white apron is smiling and holding a paintbrush. The text 'SEPTEMBER COURSES BOOKING NOW!' is in large white letters, and 'Be creative at The Studio' is in a light blue script font.

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popular aspects of the Metabolic Weight Loss Programme is there's nothing faddish about it. There are no meal replacements, diet shakes or diet pills. Clients frequently say just how easy it is to follow, they don't feel hungry and are not battling with cravings.

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guiding you through the programme with personalised support and lots of empathy. Email support is available in between consultations.

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Graham Wood – Albion Fan of the Year

By Martin Hall

Many congratulations to Graham Wood who, after 73 years as a fan, was deservedly presented with the Brighton and Hove Albion Fan of the Year Award at a dinner held at the AMEX Stadium earlier this year. Lindfield resident Graham has been following the Seagulls through thick and thin since the 1943-44 season, when his father took him on the train to watch his first match from the east terraces of the old Goldstone ground. His father's ticket cost a shilling, five pence in 'new money', and Graham's cost just half that amount!

Graham's award was sponsored by Parker Building Supplies and was presented by the company's Commercial Manager, Graham Pitts. On the company's website it states: Graham Wood, the popular, multilingual uber-fan received his nomination as a result of an online vote by his fellow fans keen to pay tribute to his dedicated attendance, cheerful banter and an array of stories from a long and interesting life.

His award was richly deserved because his health problems have never deterred him from getting to each home match and several away ones. Graham was interviewed about his life as a Seagulls fan by Johnny Cantor of BBC Radio Sussex. He also features in the following video about his loyal fanship: <https://youtu.be/tOq5GTRjqEA>



Article reprinted with kind permission from Lindfield United Reformed Church

Lindfield entrepreneur reaches semi final of VOOM 2016



Despite fraying nerves, Lindfield business woman Anikka Burton took part in a gruelling 29-hour business Pitchathon.

The nail-biting event in central London in June saw 158 professionals presenting to a panel of experts back-to-back in hope of rousing interest in their businesses.

The pitchathon was part of Virgin Media Business VOOM 2016. Over half a million public votes were cast in the first stage of the contest. From more than 3,000 entries, the 158 with the most votes qualified for the Pitchathon.

Anikka set up Not Another Bunch of Flowers, a website tailored to gifts for poorly loved ones, in 2013.

Speaking shortly after the pitch, Anikka said: "I'm not really a natural at this kind of thing but it was a fantastic experience. Being the first pitch, I wasn't sure what to expect but it meant I was bright-eyed and bushy tailed! At least now I can relax and enjoy the rest of the day."

Anikka's achievement at reaching the semi-finals was impressive. Anikka commented: "Being part of VOOM was incredible. The amount of public support I received during the voting stages was overwhelming."

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Gospel-singing workshop right on tune

Last month more than 70 people from Lindfield and surrounding areas attended a Gospel Singing Day at All Saints Church. "A day full of fun and laughter - it was good for the soul," said one workshop member.

The event was hosted by a team from the church and led by Karen Gibson, an inspirational teacher, recognised as one of the UK's leading Gospel Choir Conductors.

Participants gathered at the United Reformed Church in the High Street and, starting 'at the very beginning', they learnt how to step, clap and sing simultaneously - no mean feat for beginners! To everyone's amazement, five hours later they were singing five songs, in four part

harmony to an audience at All Saints Church - that's the power of singing gospel!

At this mini concert, 'scratch' choir members and audience alike were also treated to a heartfelt rendition of 'His Eye is on the Sparrow' by guest soloist Kora Stammers.

The church is hoping to host future gospel workshops - so watch this space for details.

The last word has to go to one attendee, whose words seem to capture the spirit of the day: "Joyful, smiling faces - we laughed all day - and being told I can sing after years of being told I can't - Oh Happy Day!"



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Keeping it in the family

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James Verrall always wanted to run a family business. His grandfather and father together owned the restaurant at nearby Beech Hurst Garden for many years and he'd seen first-hand the benefits of that experience. Now newly married James & Carla are creating a business of their own at Haywards Heath Golf Club.

The story starts right at the beginning, with the pair being born just four days apart in the former Cuckfield Hospital. They were introduced by a mutual friend in 2011 and James told his friends the next day: "I've met my wife!". James and Carla were married in Barcombe last year.

Carla is a 'local girl' and a beauty therapist by trade, but has also worked as a carer and most recently as an estate agent with Mark Revill in Lindfield.

James also grew up in the area and was always into sport playing both football and cricket. Nine year old James was introduced to golf by his grandfather, who still lives in Lindfield, and he soon had to choose which sport to focus on. He began working for a local golf club as a teenager on Saturdays but it became clear that professional golf was all he wanted to do.

James completed his PGA (Professional Golf Association) degree from the PGA National Golf Academy at The Belfry at the age of 24, and he took up the position as head professional at Haywards Heath Golf Club (HHGC) nearly three years ago.

However, in January the couple made a brave move; they decided to work together to own and run the golf pro shop at HHGC.

"This is James' dream," Carla commented. "It's what he's always wanted to do." Since January much has changed in the pro shop, including a total refurbishment (inside and out) and major refresh of the stock carried. James says: "For me it's about making every customer feeling valued and taking pride in my work. That means the little things as well as the big ones." For instance, there's always a tube of sun cream freely available in the shop to golfers who've forgotten their own. Little things that make a big difference.

The shop is one of the largest golf retailers in the area, and they have many customers from across Sussex, not just Lindfield, where the shop is based. Carla has brought in new clothing lines to the store, and they now boast an impressive range of both men's and ladies' golf wear. The couple's goal is to become the destination for golfers across the south who want great choice and superb customer service.

The pro shop is very much a partnership with Haywards Heath Golf Club itself, with James being just the fifth golf pro in the club's 94 year history. "The members have been so welcoming since I joined, and we both really feel like part of a larger family here," Carla said.

The couple will continue to improve the reach and remit of the pro shop, which, of course, also boasts an excellent golf coaching programme for all ages and abilities - including working with six local schools, Lindfield Primary Academy being one of them.

A new website has just been launched - www.jamesverrallgolf.com, they are hosting a Free TaylorMade Trial Day on Tuesday 2nd August for all golfers, and the new autumn/winter range of golf fashion will be in store next month.

Pop down to the shop (open 7.30am-6pm every day) or call 01444 414866 or email james@haywardsheathgolfclub.co.uk to ask about golf teaching or booking on to the Trial Day event. There will certainly be a warm, family welcome in store!



High Street businesses celebrate triple win

By Claire Cooper

Three of Lindfield's best loved businesses have been given the stamp of approval in this year's Muddy Stiletto Awards!

Tufnells, Swalk and La Touche all won top awards in their categories – putting Lindfield firmly on the map as the best shopping village in the county!

Muddy Stiletto is an online guide which explores what's great about Sussex, from the best shops and restaurants to hotel getaways, country walks, cosy pubs, and ideas for days out and things to do. The awards were given to businesses which received the most votes from members of the public.

Representatives from the three successful Lindfield businesses were recently presented with their certificates at a special ceremony at Bolney Wine Estate's new visitor centre.

"We were delighted to hear that Tufnells Home won the award for Best Interiors Shop, although it did come as a huge surprise as we didn't even realise that we had been entered into the competition!" said Lisa Goodger, who runs the business with her husband Jeremy.

"Whilst awards like this are lovely to receive, it is our customers who we would really like to thank and all those in the village who continually support the High Street," she added.

"The retail trade in High Streets across the country has become very precarious, especially with the increase in online shopping, and we feel very fortunate to have weathered the storm. We love to welcome customers from far and wide in Lindfield and regularly receive very positive feedback, but it is our loyal regular customers who have supported us over the years who we are particularly grateful to - they are the reason for our continued success."

Lisa also paid tribute to her staff, the 'Tufnells Team'. "We are very fortunate to have our team of local ladies who share our passion in creating an enjoyable shopping experience and work very hard to make the shops look appealing and enticing," she said.

"We have seen many changes within the High Street over the years but there has never been a better time to visit than now - there is such a variety of shops, eateries & lifestyle businesses in the village - it has certainly become a 'destination' place and now has three 'award winning businesses' to add to the mix!"

Across the High Street staff at Swalk have been celebrating their success. "We were so thrilled to be nominated and over the moon to have won the Muddy Stiletto award for the Best Gift Shop in Sussex as we were up against other wonderful independent Sussex retailers," said Rebecca Bellfield, who runs the business with Jade Logue.

"We are so passionate about SWALK, we strive to supply the most innovative and fabulous greetings cards, a quirky colourful collection of design led gifts and deliver outstanding customer service! We'd like to thank everyone who voted for us online - we are very lucky to have the support of such a loyal gang of SWALKERS!"



Rebecca added that this is an exciting year for the business which will be launching SWALK online in the next few months!

Staff at La Touche Beauty were positively glowing when they heard they had been nominated for a Muddy Stiletto Award. "But to win with more than 50% of the votes as the Best Beauty Salon in Sussex was the icing on the cake," said owner Touchell Thaddeus.

"Our thanks go to everyone who kindly voted for us. For the village to achieve three of these accolades is just super!"

This year continues to be a very exciting one for the La Touche team. "Following a hugely successful first six months of the year, we have recently launched the new Guinot Hyderderm Cellulaire Energy Facial machine, which bridges the gap between therapy and aesthetic treatments using the latest technology," said Touchell.

"We are pleased to continue leading the way forward within the industry and feel very privileged to have La Touche Beauty located within and supported by such a wonderful community.

"I'd like to publically thank my team, family, friends and our valued clients for helping to keep the magic of La Touche Beauty alive! I couldn't be happier or prouder of our achievements to date."



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Heard of the Lindfield Reading Room?

LOCAL HISTORY

By Claire Cooper

Ask most people living in the village if they have ever heard of the Reading Room and you'll probably be met with a blank stare!

Ask them about the Social Centre and you may spark a few memories from older residents and possibly those with connections to the old Junior School.

It's no surprise as these former thriving village institutions have now been confined to history and the building, which served as a meeting place for approaching 100 years, has now been converted into a house.

But lifelong Lindfield resident Kath Rusby is keeping the memory of the Reading Room alive with her own research and recollections of the history and varied roles of this important little building. It is situated in what is now Old School Court, Lewes Road.

"The idea of Reading Rooms dates back to the 1800s," said Kath. "The 'social thinkers' decided that rooms should be available to the working man and Reading Rooms started to be opened in towns and villages across the country."

Kath's research found that the Lindfield Reading Room was originally built as schoolrooms. The Church of England National Society, anxious to extend the influence of the church, set up National Schools for the education of the poor. This initiative led to Rev Sewell, one time vicar of Lindfield, establishing a National School for Lindfield. It opened in 1851 and was built on a piece of land on the Common given by the Earl of Chichester, the Lord of the Manor.

At this time a school originally founded by William Allen on Black Hill, and supported by the Congregational Chapel, was thriving with 175 pupils attending. The new National School appears to have been less popular. As in the mid 1850s, Rev Sewell decided to establish a new Anglican school called the St John's Parish School on a site he owned opposite the church. Sewell described the National Schoolrooms on the Common as objectionable,

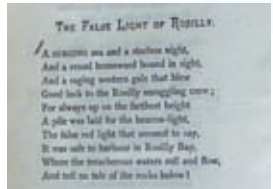
saying 'Quagmire and slush beset its approach and its drainage and sewerage were bad' and 'its distance from the church was unpleasant'. In 1856, children attending the National School transferred to his new school, but following Rev Sewell's death in 1862 the school closed.

Unfortunately it was not possible for the school to revert to the building on the Common as it had been let to 'dissenters' for their Sunday school. Rev F Mills, the new incumbent, obtained repossession during 1863 and the school reopened in January 1865 but with fewer than 30 pupils it closed forever a few months later. Rev Mills and his family became homeless in mid 1866 and, unable to find any accommodation, moved into the empty school building but within months were forced to vacate the premises. Continuing to be known as the National Schoolrooms, the building was again used for educational purposes in about 1880 when it provided temporary additional accommodation while the new Board School was being constructed next door.

The 1882 Clarke's Local Directory mentioned that the National Schoolrooms 'on the Common, apart from their nominal use as a Schoolroom, are quite famed as the scene of many a brilliant and fashionable concert, and general rendezvous of public assemblies'. However, many concerts and public gatherings transferred to the new Assembly Rooms upon their opening in May 1883.

Prominent residents recognised the social benefits of a reading room and the old National Schoolrooms were taken over and inaugurated as the Reading Room in 1886. Kath explained: "The Reading Room became a place for the working classes to meet and receive local information and charitable assistance for those who had very little money coming in. Newspapers were available for those who could read but unable to afford to buy one. For those who could not read, social evenings were held which included readings of news reports, along with poetry and verse capturing events of the day." She believed the first caretaker was Mr Henry Tester.

When the Reading Room closed and was being



cleared, Kath was delighted to come across a small book containing a selection of news stories made into verse which would have been read at one of the social events. It's now one of her most treasured possessions.

In those days, Lindfield did not have a village hall, so the Reading Room was increasingly used as a community centre for the receipt of payments to the Coal, Clothing and Boot clubs. Also, all kinds of events were held from jumble sales to whist drives to the annual Chrysanthemum Show. "It was even used as changing rooms by local football teams, who would heat kettles of water to wash off the mud before going home," said Kath.

Among the many village groups regularly using the hall was the popular Church Lads Brigade. "Most of the Lindfield young men would have joined this organisation," said Kath. "It was the place where, in 1914, local young men were recruited from the Lads Brigade into the armed forces. They formed in the Reading Rooms and marched to Muster Green in Haywards Heath where they were transported to Newhaven and over to France," said Kath. "When I visit the village War Memorial at All Saints Church, which lists the names of the Fallen, I think about these young men, many who would have enjoyed time spent at the Church Lads Brigade in the Reading Rooms."

With the newly opened King Edward Hall being converted into a Red Cross Hospital for the Great War, the Reading Room became the village hall. Apart from all the usual social events, Kath explained: "On Friday afternoons it was the Infant Welfare Centre, formed to look after the health of children under five years old, who were weighed and given regular medical checks. It also provided a social meeting place for mothers; a cup of tea was available but mothers had to bring their own sugar!"

After the Great War, the building continued as a 'secondary village hall', that is to say for events deemed better suited to the Reading Room than the grander King Edward Hall. These included wedding receptions, children's parties, youth club, whist drives, Mother's

Union meetings and the popular Saturday Night Dance. "I used to love the Saturday night dances, the music and the bands," Kath recalled fondly. "There were five men in the original band, called the Silver Star Band, with piano, accordion, saxophone, violin and drum. By 1936 the Mouth Organ Band, formed by the local youth with Stan Walder as vocalist, had taken over the 'Tuppenny Hop'. All the village youth attended and many local romances blossomed! Dances at the King Edward Hall were only for those in evening dress and evening shoes so as not to damage the floor.

"Children living in the village in the 1920s and 1930s enjoyed riding on the huge rocking horse in the Reading Rooms and gathering for the Christmas party organised by the Infant Welfare staff. The stage was used for a performance, usually by the medical staff," said Kath. "At that time Mr Walder was the Secretary."

At the start of World War Two and the arrival of evacuees from London, the Reading Room was also used for classrooms, as they were taught separately from village children.

"After the Second World War, the Reading Room became the Social Centre, a mixed club for adults and the village youths. It was fully equipped with billiard table and many other games," said Kath. "Although it was extremely popular, it closed after ten years when the lease expired and no one had remembered to apply to renew it!

"The building was subsequently sold by the Parochial Church Council to East Sussex County Council and incorporated into the adjacent Junior School. That brought the building 'full circle' back to use as a school. After the school moved to its new home in 2000, the site was redeveloped as Old School Court and the Reading Room building was converted into a private house."

This is now home to Mrs Lawson, who kindly invited Kath and Lindfield Life into her home to show us the once thriving village centre has been sympathetically converted into a warm and welcoming home.

Festival excitement is building

Lindfield Arts Festival programme is continuing to build for 17th September.

There will be activities to suit people of all ages. There are many family friendly events including a graffiti workshop and competition, a chance to learn circus skills and shows, dance classes and performances, storytelling and creative writing, and Discover & Be for very little ones. We would encourage you to register from 1st August on www.lindfieldartsfestival.com/events to ensure you have a place.

Most of the events are FREE but some are restricted due to health & safety rules and seating capacity! Your email receipt will be your ticket. Staff at SWALK have kindly offered to sell tickets to the two workshops and one concert that require payment.

Mark Spofforth MBE, High Sheriff of West Sussex, will open the Festival at 10am. He and his wife, Von Spofforth, will spend much of the day enjoying the variety of arts on show. Mark and Von have also kindly agreed to judge the Graffiti competition and award a prize for best in show for the Classic Cars.

Members of Lindfield Dramatic Club are busy preparing their street play. Did you know that the railway nearly came to Lindfield and not to Haywards Heath? Watch the play and you'll find out why.

On and off the High Street, entertainment will also

include Becky Steven's dance workshops, buskers, face painting, a photography exhibition from James Winspear, Rok Skool, the Weald Ukulele players, African Drummers and authors and storytellers. Once again, the King Edward Hall will host the popular arts and crafts. Lucy Ellie and the Hophead Band, Lorna Collins, Mid Sussex Sinfonia and Rok Skool artists are all performing in The Stand Up, Bent Arms, Red Lion or United Reformed Church.

You are sure to find something to keep the family amused all day! More information - see the website www.lindfieldartsfestival.com



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Renowned Oathall teacher shares MBE ceremony with his family

Being presented with an MBE at Buckingham Palace was always going to be a very special day for former Oathall teacher and head of the school farm Howard Wood.

But discovering that the honour was given following nominations mainly from students and would be presented by farm friend and ally Prince Charles was the icing on the cake!

"I was thrilled to find that 'student power' had got me the award and was hoping it would be presented by the Prince," said Howard, who received the honour for Services to Education. "The Prince said it gave him a lot of pleasure to present me with my honour after all these years."

Howard taught at Oathall for 38 years, retiring in 2014, and during that time built up a successful and award winning school farm.

When the school farm was threatened with closure, the pupils wrote to Prince Charles who famously stepped in to save the day. The Prince maintained an interest in the farm and the students, inviting them to visit his home at Highgrove.

"The Prince asked me if the Oathall Farm was still carrying on and reiterated 'It there's any trouble you know where I am'," said Howard.

Howard travelled to the Palace with his wife Mary and daughters Claire and Olivia. After the ceremony the family enjoyed a celebration at the Ritz Hotel, where they were joined by Howard's sister Anne and her husband Ian who had flown down from Scotland, Claire's husband Paddy and their daughter Matilda. "The taxi driver who took us to the Ritz afterwards refused to take a fare as it was our special day, which was a lovely gesture," said Howard.



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Dazzling festival marks charity's 21st anniversary

FESTIVAL 21 FEATURE

Friends of Sussex Hospices comes of age on Saturday 3rd September, with a dazzling day and evening of thrilling family entertainment marking the charity's 21st anniversary.

Festival 21 will include a spectacular Son et Lumière and laser light show, air show with replica First World War fighter planes, vintage fun fair, massive classic car display and historic battle re-enactments. There will be a big top circus, strolling jesters, medieval musicians and children's entertainers, plus delicious food and drink, a licensed bar, and tea and cake served in a giant 'hospicetality' marquee. Enjoy live music from the Swingtime Sweethearts and local bands. Festival 21 even welcomes the 100-strong Pendyrus Male Choir, coming all the way from Wales to perform in a concert with a repertoire that includes 'Sussex by the Sea'!

The festival will be held in the grounds of Danny House, a splendid Elizabethan manor beneath the South Downs near Hurstpierpoint. In the evening the sound and light show will project colourful images on to the historic façade of the house, telling the story of Sussex from ancient times to modern days. Look out for Roman legionnaires, Saxons, Norman conquerors, great galleons of the Spanish Armada, scenes from the English Civil War, First World War and the Battle of Britain.

The invaluable work of the 12 Sussex hospice care providers will be celebrated during the evening and a moment of reflection will see 3000 lights twinkle in the night sky as we remember friends and loved ones. The evening's finale is a spectacular laser light show.

Friends of Sussex Hospices chair Kathy Gore said: "This is the 21st birthday year of FSH and we want to mark it with a brilliant event where there will be a host of attractions for the whole family to enjoy. All 12 Sussex hospice care providers have been involved in planning Festival 21, which will celebrate the work they do and the care they give to young and old across East and West Sussex."

Tickets are £22 per adult if booked in advance or £25 on the day. Children under 16 go free if accompanied by pre-booked adults or £5 on the day.

Friends of Sussex Hospices is run entirely by volunteers and since 1995 has distributed £1.6 million to assist with hospice running costs. In June the charity was given The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, the highest honour that can be given to a voluntary organisation and the equivalent of an MBE.

Photo below: Supporters and Committee members, Friends of Sussex Hospices Courtesy of Graham Franks (www.grahamfrankspics.co.uk)



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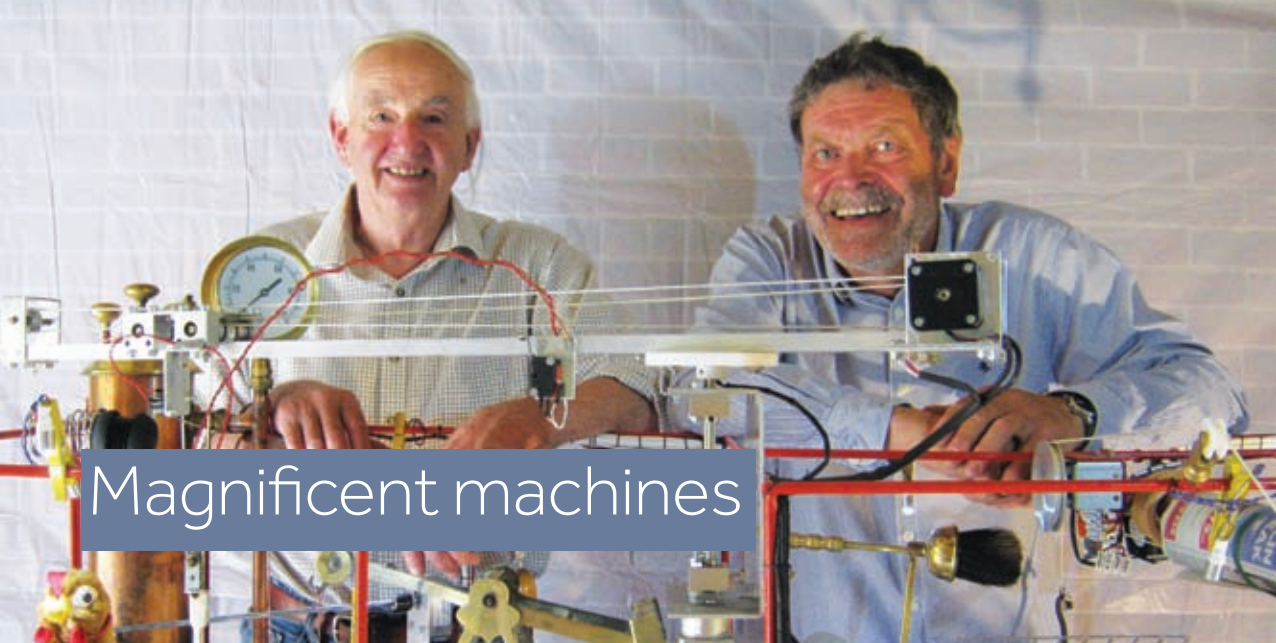
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Magnificent machines

By Claire Cooper

An amazing breakfast making machine, which started life as a scribble on the back of an envelope, was showcased on national television last month.

Created by inventors Merv Huggett of Lindfield and Pete Browne of Highbrook, the Breakfast Making Machine was one of three inventions featured on the BBC's Britain's Most Spectacular Backyard Builds – a programme which celebrates the best of the country's most 'ingenious, eccentric and bonkers creations!'

Merv and Pete were invited to take part in the show following their work with the Roland Emett Society. "We were asked to maintain the eight Rowland Emett machines which went on display last year at Brighton and Ditchling Museums," said Merv. "Some of the machines were commissioned for the film Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, including the Humbug Major and Clockwork Lullaby."

The pair were approached by researchers and invited to design a machine which was useful in the home. "We sat down, drank coffee and exchanged ideas, jotting down notes on the back of an old envelope," said Pete. "I'd say around 90 per cent of our inventions have been designed on the backs of envelopes!"

Ideas included a money launderer (machine to clean and polish cash), a banana peeler and Christmas cracker puller.

"We both like making things that look extremely complicated but do something simple and stupid," said Merv.

But it was the idea of a breakfast making machine which caught the eye of the researchers, and the pair were given a budget of £2,500 and ten weeks to turn their idea into reality. A camera crew and presenters Sara Cox and Piers Taylor followed Pete and Merv's progress as the machine came to life.

"We built the basic skeleton, starting with a spoon pinched from Pete's kitchen drawer, bent into shape and then just let our imaginations go wild!" said Merv. "The most complicated bit was building the crane to carry the egg. Once we got that worked out it was a lot of fun!" added Pete.

Most of the machine is built from bits and pieces collected by the inventors over the years. "We are always acquiring bits and pieces – anything made from copper or brass is good," said Pete. "And we love kitchen equipment – particularly egg whisks!" He added that the budget was spent on better quality motors and electronics.

The finished product can boil an egg, make toast, tea and coffee, deliver a morning newspaper all to the sound of the Archers sound track.

The design features an old fire extinguisher, brass scales, tower crane and even a rubber glove! Some parts are crucial to the working of the machine – others, like the moving chicken, are purely decorative! "The chicken was static but two days before the unveiling we thought it would be a good idea to make it move," said Merv. "Before I could work out how to do it, Pete had run it through the bandsaw to cut off the head! I was up until 11 o'clock that night working on the software to make it happen!"



They both agree that their favourite part of the machine is the teabag jiggle. "I'm also fond of the clean-up bit at the end which deposits the cup, plates and leftovers straight into the bin," said Pete. "That always makes everyone laugh!"

"We were going to add a device to break the egg and make the toast into soldiers but that would have been too complicated, particularly with the ten week deadline," added Merv.

The pair have dedicated their invention to their wives, who appear in the BBC programme testing the machine in front of family and friends. The night before the programme was screened, the inventors also demonstrated the machine live on the BBC One Show, serving up breakfast to comedian Bill Bailey.

"It didn't go quite as smoothly as we had hoped but it was fun and went down well," said Merv.

The pair are totally happy with the finished product. "I think it's the best thing we've done so far," said Merv. "There's no reason why it shouldn't still be working in many years' time!"

Merv and Pete joined forces four years ago after being introduced by a mutual friend. "I had advertised in the local paper for a retired eccentric engineer to work on projects with me but no one came forward!" said Pete.

They hit it off immediately. "We arranged to meet at Pete's house," Merv recalled. "I told my wife I'd be about an hour – five hours later I was still there. We had so many ideas between us. We just clicked!" and Huggett & Browne Contraptions was born.

Their list of wacky inventions include a Gentleman's Pedal Powered Bubble Blower, made from an old tandem, Robbie the Robot, made from a dustbin incinerator and old golf trolley, and the Steampunk style Professor Potts Pyrotechnic Igniter, to activate a New Year firework display.

They also hit the headlines in 2012, launching a teddy bear into space!

Their next project is to design quirky cash collection machines for St Peter and St James Hospice. "We'd like to design machines for their charity shops which do something silly and encourage people to keep feeding it coins!" said Pete.

The pair aren't giving much away but are leaning towards a couple of wacky ideas which may include magical underground world and a ball rolling machine! "To be honest we're never quite sure how our inventions will end up," said Merv. "Once we have the basic design it's just a matter of making it up as we go along!"





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Design classics

HOME FRONT

By Jacqui Smith, interior designer

In our line of work we are called on by reps on a regular basis, usually bringing with them the latest collections. The great reps, the ones who understand our business and our customers, will often arrive at our offices buzzing with excitement over a new design since they just know it will work well for us. This week when our lovely Sanderson rep bounced into our offices with the new William Morris collection hot off the press I could not help but share her enthusiasm. Fabric collections come and go. Some contemporary designs you can tell are destined to be the classics of tomorrow, others are more fashion led and less enduring. William Morris designs however, like the Charles Eames lounge chair and the Chesterfield sofa, have a permanent place in design and never seem to date.

There is an honesty and simplicity about the rooms William Morris designed, and I think that approach is so very relevant now. He famously stated 'Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful' and I could not agree with this more. To me the new Pure Morris collection retains the integrity of his work yet the pared back neutral palette breathes new life into these iconic designs opening them up to a whole new audience. As I cooed my way through the wallpaper book, I commented on the beading effect on Pure Strawberry Thief. It would seem though that this is nothing new.

When the Morris design team were scanning the archives for monochromatic patterns they came across many different embellishment techniques, including crushed glass and metallic inks. The Pure Morris range uses beading rather than crushed glass on some of the wallpapers but the effect is the same; further proof of the lasting nature of these designs.

In my past life I worked at Penguin books and will never forget my visit to the archives in search of inspiration for a new range of Penguin merchandise, so I can imagine the fun the design team at Morris must have had when delving into the collection of original hand-blocks and then playing with the inks to develop new versions of these well-known designs. Absolute heaven.

The new collection comprises eight wallpapers and nine curtain fabrics. We have recently specified Willow Bough, a design that dates back to 1887, in a care home lounge, a care home by the name of 'The Willows'. It was not only the design, and of course the name, which drew us to it but that we felt that it would be a paper that so many people would relate to. We feel that the famous and much loved Morris designs will promote a sense of home and assurance to residents moving in to the newly refurbished care home. The new Pure Willow Bough range offers new colour ways, cool silver and stone and a striking silver and graphite version. Pure Net Ceiling, another paper dating back to 1895, is one of five ceiling papers created by the firm. It's utterly gorgeous and equally beguiling in the embroidery. Described as a contemporary lace it's available in three colour ways – flax, paper white and dove. I love it, and, given that I 'believe it to be beautiful', I feel that the master craftsman himself would approve of me having it in my own house!

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Street parties in the village



Residents of Compton Road turned out on 12th June to celebrate HM The Queen's birthday



Fieldway residents were invited to a party on the green last month which included tea and cake and adults vs kids tug-of-war!

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The Alternative Healthcare centre in Haywards Heath has an extensive variety of treatments to help a whole manner of different ailments, from acupuncture, osteopathy, reiki, massage, to aromatherapy, etc but at the forefront of the centre is Ayurveda.

Ayurveda is a 5000 year old Indian science of healthcare. It assists a person in identifying their disorder and with the aid of diet, herbs and treatment the disorder is literally detoxed from the system. The centre was created due to the miraculous results Ayurveda had on the founder's son when he was diagnosed with Arthritis.



In order to bring the authenticity, knowledge and wisdom of Ayurveda to the centre, we are incredibly excited to announce that Dr Shijoe Mathew will be joining the centre on 1st August. Dr Mathew has been the chief physician for the past 4 years at the world renowned Ananda Spa in the Himalayas, treating highly prestigious and celebrity clientele. He has resigned from his post at Ananda to reside at The Alternative Healthcare. His vast knowledge and experience in treating such disorders as arthritis, fibromyalgia, depression, stress, anxiety, eczema, asthma, colitis and many more will be a huge asset to the centre. Dr Mathew's decision to leave Ananda to bring Ayurveda to the UK and help enlighten as many people as possible to the healing science is testament to his passionate belief in the

system. His diary has now opened for the beginning of August, with his impressive credentials, wisdom on the subject and logical manner in explaining disease and disorders, space may be limited. Please call the centre on 01444 474447 to make your appointment. He will also host a number of talks at the centre on Ayurveda and different disorders, so please do keep an eye on the website for times and dates of these.

The authenticity of the centre continues with the addition of Dr Shine Babu. Dr Shine will also be joining us from India in August. He is a naturopathic doctor, physiotherapist and Ayurvedic therapist, he will be the centre's resident yoga instructor, teaching various styles of yoga and meditation for varying abilities including therapeutic yoga for different disorders such as arthritis and other autoimmune disorders. This is addition to the current yogis will bring a well balanced variety of different styles for different people. He will also assist the Doctor in providing a comprehensive healthcare solution for almost all health issues.



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Joshua supports memorial fund

A charity set up in memory of a little girl who died from cancer aged just 8 has been given a boost by a Lindfield student.

Joshua Walker, of West View, recently presented a cheque for £201.22 to Val Fabb, Chair of the Trustees of the Gillian Fabb Memorial Fund.

Joshua, a student at Oathall Community College, is taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (Bronze) and, as part of one of his challenges, he designed and made bird nesting-boxes, which he sold on a stall set up in The Orchards Shopping Centre in Haywards Heath and at the Cuckoo Fayre in Cuckfield. Joshua is also a current member of the Lindfield Explorer Scouts.

This is the 40th anniversary year of the Fund which supports research into childhood cancers in the Paediatric Research Laboratories attached to the Royal Marsden Hospital. Over the years supporters have raised almost £200,000 for child cancer research and Gillian's mum Val hopes to pass the milestone this year.

"Although children diagnosed with cancer nowadays have a much better chance of a complete recovery than they did 40 years ago, cancer is still the greatest cause of death in children, apart from accidents, so we do not allow ourselves to become complacent," she said.

"We are really grateful to Joshua for his splendid support for the Fund and wish him every success for the future."



Above: Joshua is here presenting the cheque to Valerie Fabb, the Chair of Trustees



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School children get chance to remember



By Matt Taylor

On Friday 1st July, as the nation paused to remember the Centenary of the Battle of the Somme, Lindfield village schoolchildren paid their own respects to the fallen of World War One (WWI).

A group of local amateur military historians arranged a commemoration event held at both Lindfield Primary Academy and Blackthorns Community Primary Academy. Over 400 children and their teaching staff participated in this event.

Every child had a 15 minute session experiencing the Lindfield Village in World War One exhibition, led by Richard Bryant and Malcolm Grace. In the session the children learnt about such subjects as: Lindfield men going to war, agriculture and rationing, King Edward Hall Hospital, as well as some detailed biographies of Lindfield men who fell in WWI. Learning about the village school in World War One and that the former Tavistock & Summerhill school site was a German Prisoner of War camp were of particular interest.



A classroom had been converted into a World War One mini museum, containing dozens of genuine WWI artefacts and memorabilia. This museum displayed items of uniform, hats, medals, shell casings, regimental badges, original stereograph postcards and photographs of men from all nations who fought in the war. The main item of interest was an original 1916 Lee Enfield rifle.

Members of the teaching staff also displayed personal/family memorabilia, passed to them by relatives who fought (and in some cases died) during WWI. The museum was brought to life by the explanations provided to the children by the volunteer historians, who tried their utmost to answer the dozens of questions posed to

them by the children. This 15-minute session permitted the children to touch and engage with original items from this devastating era of 20th century history.

Each child also attended an assembly on WWI, The Battle of the Somme & The Lochnagar Mine Crater presented by a local amateur historian. This assembly provided the children with a brief insight into what caused the war, the main events of each year of the conflict and the Battle of the Somme itself.

The assembly was concluded with many facts relating to the Lochnagar Mine Crater (Somme, Northern France), one of the seventeen mine explosions which took place at 7.28am on 1st July 1916, just two minutes before thousands 'went over the top' at 7.30am. Every child was asked to try to remember just one fact from the event to share with a relative or friend who was not present.

At 11am the Fire Bell at Lindfield Academy rang for a few seconds to mark the beginning of the 100 second silence. Pupils at both schools stood up and remained still, impeccably observing silent remembrance. After 100 seconds had passed, the Fire Bell sounded once more for a few seconds to mark the end of the silence and the event itself.

Mr Marcus Still, Principal of Lindfield Primary Academy, said: "We would all like to say a big thank you to Mr Taylor and his team of enthusiastic volunteers who brought the past to life for our children in our community. The children and adults were enthused for the entire time and listened carefully to the facts and responses to their questions. A very moving tribute."

The schoolchildren were offered the opportunity to make a small contribution towards the purchase of 11 'plank plaques' to be placed at the Lochnagar Crater, one for each of the 11 Lindfield men killed as a result of the Battle of the Somme.

The 'plank plaques' will be donated by the pupils and staff of Lindfield & Blackthorns Primary Academies. Each plaque will have a title similar to 'Lindfield Village (W. Sussex) Schools remembers' and then the details of the fallen Lindfield soldier.

At the date of writing this article the target of £275 to purchase these plaques has been reached, with an additional contribution of approximately £50 being donated to the Royal British Legion (Lindfield Branch) annual Poppy Appeal fundraising activities.

The Lochnagar Crater (www.lochnagarcrater.org) is a not-for-profit organisation, relying solely on charitable contributions to maintain the crater as a memorial to all those who fell in WWI.

The organisers of this event would like to thank the Lindfield History Project Group and the Sussex Military History Society and Chris Comber for supporting these commemoration activities with their knowledge, time and funds. However, the main thanks is reserved for the children themselves, who were a credit to both schools.



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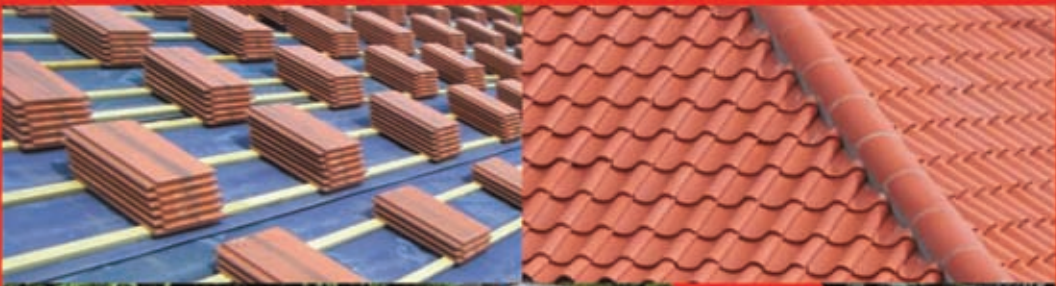
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The first train to 'Cuckfield & Lindfield' arrived at...

The first train arrived at the 'Station for Cuckfield & Lindfield' in 1841 ... at Haywards Heath!

175 years later, the newly refurbished station will be completed, and to mark this anniversary, on Sunday 18th September, a huge celebration is planned with lots of Victorian fun for all the family. Commemorative legacies will be unveiled in the station, showing the first train as well as a mosaic made by all local schools and another by our local Twinning Association.

In 1825, John Rennie's proposed 'direct' London to Brighton railway was vigorously opposed by the town and parish of Cuckfield. Lindfield also opposed the railway, so the line passed between them, shortly named Hayward's Heath; this was the terminus until the line opened to Brighton, putting the 'new town' firmly on the map.

Building began around the station immediately, with a timber merchant's yard and a beer shop probably on the site of the later, now demolished, Liverpool Arms, and the Station Hotel (now Hayworthe House) completed by 1843. By 1887 Haywards Heath was recognised as a town.

On Sunday 18th September The Bluebell's Stepney will be at the station. There will be train rides, land trains, horse and carriage rides, Children's Train Station Adventures, Marching Bands, a Grand Procession, Films in Victoria Park, Victorian Fun Fair and much, much more; so truly a great day out for all the family - don't forget your Victorian costume!

Join in the fun! For more details or to get involved, contact Ruth de Mierre on 01444 453399 or Tim Briggs on 07799 643 721.



Above: Lindfield's Philip Ladd and Gwyneth Busfield, the great granddaughter of Mr Joseph Flesher – the contractor responsible for the construction of the line through Haywards Heath.

Left: 'It's all a-cause that tunnel' painting by Philip Ladd

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Fancy a Balcombe Walk?

By Joan Moon



Renowned for its tasty teas and scrummy cakes, the annual Balcombe Walk will put on its famous spread again this year – on Sunday 11th September. And you can have some! The one small proviso is that you first of all enjoy a wonderful country walk and raise sponsorship or make a donation to support St Catherine's Hospice, Crawley.

For the 26th year, the Haywards Heath Support Group for St Catherine's Hospice is proud to present the Balcombe Fundraising Walk, at Victory Hall, Balcombe.

The walk takes in some of the very best of the wonderful Sussex countryside, with fabulous views. You may want to take on the challenge of the full 12.5 mile circular route or you may set yourself a gentler target of four, six or nine miles; if you do that, we'll send a chauffeur to get you back to Balcombe!

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Honey Marinade and Glaze

Stir together 100ml clear honey, soy sauce, minced fresh ginger and garlic – about 2tbs of each – then add fruit juice to thin the mixture – about 100ml. Use to marinate poultry pieces, chops, spare ribs or sausages for several hours. Lift the meat out of the marinade with a fork and cook for half the cooking time. Then brush or pour remaining mixture over and continue to cook.

Honey Cake

This is a recipe from my much missed colleague Katie Stewart. It is made in a saucepan!

Preheat oven 180°. Using a generous sized pan measure in 150g butter, 100g soft brown sugar, 175g clear honey and 1tbs water. Stir over low heat until the butter has melted and the ingredients blended. Leave to cool to just warm. Beat in two eggs, one at a time then, through a sieve, add 200g self-raising flour. Beat until very smooth then pour into a lined 28x18cm tin. Spread evenly and top with flaked almonds. Bake 30-35 min or until risen and firm to the touch. Leave to lukewarm before lifting out of the tin then remove the lining paper and cool on a rack before cutting into squares.

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By Caroline Young

Honey is one of the oldest foods known to man and is widely documented - from a rock painting dating from 8,000 years ago in Valencia to the Bible – ‘the land of milk and honey’. It was used not only as a food but medicinally, including spreading on wounds to promote healing. Standard honey can be a product of more than one country, which is heat processed and filtered (clear honey) or crystallised (set honey). But now is the time to enjoy local honey where bees have only gathered the flower nectar from a very small area so that the flavour varies depending on the local flowers – such as lime honey from Lindfield. The honey is simply warmed then filtered – to give a rich flavour.

Honey can be used as the sweetener in virtually all recipes – here are a few of my favourites.

Honey and Tahini Salad Dressing

Measure into a blender or processor the finely grated rind of 1 unwaxed lemon and 100ml lemon juice, 100ml olive oil, 3tbs tahini (ground sesame seed paste), 2-3 tbs clear honey and some crushed garlic (to taste). Buzz until smooth then season to taste .

Delicious poured over still hot thickly sliced boiled new potatoes, plus some peppery baby watercress leaves and chopped spring onions. Serve warm with cold meats.

Grilled Apples with Honey

This is a Nigel Slater recipe – another of my favourite writers – not least because he indexed me in one of his books (fleeting fame!).

Peel dessert apples and halve them vertically, removing the core. Brush all over with lemon juice and place cut-side down on the grill rack. Brush with butter. Grill for about 10 min then turn them over, fill the hollows with honey and continue to grill until they are tender when tested with a knife point.

This would work equally well with peach, nectarine, fig (no need to peel these fruits) or pear halves. Try a pinch of cinnamon over the honey. Serve with ice cream.

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The story of Lindfield Dramatic Club

In an era defined by technology and everything that that can bring to the 'entertainment' table, there are still, in the UK, more than two thousand amateur theatre groups, staging some 30,000 productions a year. Prominent in Mid Sussex in that number is Lindfield Dramatic Club, which this year is celebrating its 80th anniversary...

Below is its story – a story that will be brought to life on stage at the end of October when the club presents 'Acting Our Age; the history of Lindfield Dramatic Club'.

By Rex Cooper

Lindfield Youth Dramatic Club was formed in 1936 by John Gordon Ash, the son of theatrical parents.

His friend Donald Castle took him to a drama lecture and it inspired his first production, Galsworthy's Strife, that year. Other friends were cajoled into taking part and the show was a triumph.

Five more John Ash productions followed, each more ambitious and acclaimed than the last, before, in 1939, he bowed out to go on the professional stage.

By that July, new producer Donald Castle had cast the thriller *The Case of the Frightened Lady* for the autumn production. It was in rehearsals when war was declared and all activities ceased. With the war scattering the LYDC players far and wide, the depleted club regrouped in 1946.

The Lindfield Dramatic Club, as it would now be known, declared its dedication to 'the furtherance of dramatic art in Lindfield' and the fruits of its labours were seen in 1949 when producer Barbara Jones lifted the winner's shield in the Sussex County Full-Length Drama Festival with *The Cradle Song*.

This victory gave the club a new confidence to tackle a wide range of plays through the 1950s, from English domestic comedy to landmark productions such as *The Devil's Disciple*. And it was not just the club's performers who were gathering praise. The wardrobe department worked wonders for Henry VIII's court in *The Rose Without A Thorn* and Samuel Pepys' London circle in *And So To Bed*.

As 1960 ushered in a decade of cultural innovation, the LDC gave a nod to the gritty urban North with *Billy Liar*. Even the club's annual dinners referenced the 60s' satire boom with irreverent cabarets, *That Was The LDC That Was*, *Belt Up* and *The Lindfield Eisteddfod*. Hits of

the decade included *The Long and the Short and the Tall* and the American classic, *Our Town*.

With the club's first musical presentation, *The Boy Friend*, and its celebratory 50th, and biggest ever, production, *Under Milk Wood*, Lindfield Dramatic Club was reaching ever greater heights.

At the dawn of the 1970s, a decade which would prove to be a golden age for amateur theatre, membership topped 150, and with several talented directors the club branched out and blossomed in many different directions.

The garden productions of Shakespeare plays quickly became a Lindfield institution, and the introduction of children's shows delighted a new generation of audiences. The club had a thriving youth section and many joined the adults in the colourful Victorian Music Hall entertainment to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977.

Serious drama also played a big part in the 70s, with plays by Fry, Miller and Stoppard, as well as revivals of old favourites *Thunder Rock* and *Shaw's The Devil's Disciple*. The latter was the final choice of producer Harold Skinner, who died suddenly during the rehearsal period. His wife Barbara took over, summing up the spirit of the club by vowing that 'the show must go on'.

The diversity of its productions throughout the 1980s testified to the strength of the LDC and its ability to attract a wide range of producers, performers and audiences. Children were well catered for, the scope of the outdoor productions widened and there was fun to be had with *Lock Up Your Daughters*, *Bedroom Farce* and the club's Golden Jubilee production, Noel Coward's *Present Laughter*. The commitment to quality drama continued with Chekhov and Priestley.

As the final curtain fell in this decade for founder member Don Castle and long-serving chairman and president Fred Edwardson, the club they had worked so hard for was still thriving, half a century on.

In a changing world the LDC had done well to survive so long but, with falling membership, the days of three or four productions a year were gone and, as the 1990s progressed, keeping both audiences and club members engaged became a struggle.

Sure-fire comedy attractions kept the treasurer happy, but the club also needed to meet its acting members' appetite for strong drama.

Nevertheless, this decade proved that its wealth of talent could still accomplish much. Reliable comedies such as *Outside Edge* and costume dramas *The Sleeping Prince* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* all pulled in good audiences, as did the thriller *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

The club celebrated its 60th anniversary in 1996 with Ronald Harwood's theatrical drama *The Dresser*. Later that year there was a happy reunion with past club members, including founder John Ash, at a celebration dinner held in the Bent Arms.

The club welcomed the new millennium with a confident production of *Pygmalion*, but soon the realities of declining membership meant that small-scale plays would dominate the next few years.

The choice of play was never more difficult or more crucial with the club reduced to one major production a year but, fortunately, modern classics *Abigail's Party* and *Educating Rita* satisfied casts and audiences alike and the club established a reputation for high quality theatre-in-the-round productions of Alan Ayckbourn plays.

With the death of John Ash in 2002, the club had outlived its founder, but the future was precarious.

In 2005, for the first time (excluding the war years), Lindfield Dramatic Club failed to mount a production of any kind but did, however, present a major exhibition in the spring of 2006 to mark the club's 70th anniversary. *Lindfield Limelight* explored the rich history of the club and celebrated its role in the life of the village.

New members were duly attracted and two award-winning productions followed. With new found confidence the club mounted two productions in 2009, for the first time in almost a decade. Its tradition of plays for children was revived with *The Selfish Shellfish* in the spring and it returned to thoughtful adult drama and comedy in the autumn with Alan Bennett's *The Lady in the Van*.

Against an ethos of 'finding a good play to match the actors available', broad comedy has dominated the autumn productions in the present decade, although a return to Peter Shaffer's more thought-provoking *Lettice and Lovage* in 2015 brought a huge effort from cast and crew and was appreciated by reasonably-sized audiences.

Balancing these efforts for the past few years has been a new, popular innovation in our regular spring bank holiday spot, which sees a mixture of one-act plays, rehearsed readings and two-handers split by an interval taken up by the serving of a hot one-course meal.

And so to 80th anniversary celebrations...



Bard in the Barn returns



By David Tingley

When you know a farmyard barn is going to be used as a theatre venue, you set your expectations quite low! However, the recent Players in the Park production at Cockhaise Farm just outside Lindfield had me surprised - and certainly for the better. The barn was not only lit by a sizeable lighting rig but also included huge pieces of set to form the backdrop to the stage. The seating was even set in tiers.

Cathryn Parker, who founded Players in the Park with her husband Geoff, did a fantastic job directing the cast in what she described as 'one of the wittiest of Shakespeare's comedies' - Much Ado About Nothing.

Alongside the love story of the young, love-struck Hero (Rebecca Bond) and Claudio (Daniel Hardwick), there is the wonderful, and slightly farcical, relationship development of the hard-hearted Benedick (Chris Parke) and the truly stubborn Beatrice (Rebecca Warnett).

I really enjoyed the way Rebecca and Chris played off one another, particularly when they were against each other. Her put-downs were second to none! However, Rebecca had a great knack of showing her characters softer side when she thought she was being admired by the charming Benedick; the matriarch turned right around.

One special moment of fine comedy for me was a scene when Boy Fidelio (played by the young Wilfred Watson) was asked to fetch something for Benedick, however when he returns his master is trying to hide from others and wants nothing to do with the boy. Their silent and yet perfectly understandable gestures to each other were hilarious.

Another notable moment in what was a brilliant evening's entertainment was the arrival of the nightwatchmen late in the second act, headed up by the duo that was Verges (Tony Bannister) and Dogberry (Bob Hamilton). The pair had natural comedy timing in the delivery of their funny lines - as well as the amusing job of trying to mobilise what can only be described as the Dad's Army of Shakespeare's time.

My family had a great time that night, and I am delighted to announce that St Peter & St James Hospice did phenomenally well from the ten nights of performances which raised nearly £13,000 for the well-loved hospice based in Wivelsfield Green.

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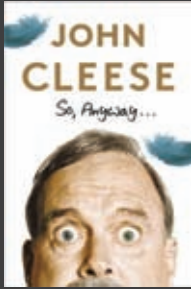


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So Anyway by John Cleese

BOOK REVIEW

By Cavan Wood

John Cleese has for over fifty years been an important part of British humour. From working with David Frost to helping found the Pythons, to Fawlty Towers and films like A Fish Called Wanda, he has helped shape the way we see humour.

This autobiography does give us some insight into how a comic writer works and some of the skills they need to develop. Ultimately though, this is an unbalanced book in the four hundred and four pages; it takes until page 351 to get to a somewhat lacking in detail account of the Pythons. I suspect this suggests that there will be a more detailed memoir about it or is Cleese tacitly showing that Michael Palin's diaries are the last word in describing this period?

We get a glimpse too of the irritable Cleese, the man who thought he had come to term with his own demons but whose four marriages suggest that he has not. He is a complex man, with many strengths, but clearly his depressions, his failures and difficulty with relationships need to be explored. Perhaps he is not as well suited to telling his own story as he thinks? There is a deeper story to tell than the one that emerges through this admittedly entertaining book.

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The Golf Hybrid

TEEING OFF

By James Verrall, Head Golf Professional

Hopefully many of you have at least one hybrid in your golf bag. If not this is something I would recommend. The days of taking a 3 iron off a downhill lie 200 yards out should be a thing of the past. But many golfers often wonder just how to play the hybrid correctly, and this is something I want to help explain.

Although a hybrid looks more like a fairway wood, you must play it more like an iron. Therefore, you are looking to make a descending blow on the ball rather than a sweeping motion. You should expect to see a little divot once you have struck the ball.

Keep your weight centred like an iron, with your hands very slightly leaning ahead of the ball. The ball position should be that of the equivalent iron. So treat a 6 hybrid like the ball position of a 6 iron.

Don't sweep the club away on the backswing like a wood. Hinge your wrists relatively early like an iron to allow yourself to hit down on the ball.

Swing through the ball finishing with your weight on the front leg. Don't hang back and try to scoop the ball into the air as the club will hit the ground first.

The hybrid is easier to hit out of the centre of the face and will fly higher and land softer than a long iron. This is great when attacking long par 3s or long approach shots into greens.

For more hybrid help or to come and try some of the latest models from companies such as Taylormade, Ping and Callaway, please come and visit myself and the professional team at Haywards Heath Golf Club with a guarantee of competitive prices and excellent customer service.



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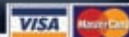
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WI craft success at show

By Claire Cooper

Sheep themed exhibits lovingly made by members of Scaynes Hill WI picked up a flock of awards at this year's South of England Show.

Inspired by last year's success, the members entered every single class in the annual county wide competition (one of only two groups to achieve this) and brought home an array of rosettes. It's another big achievement for the small village group which was competing against 52 other WI groups.

There was a hat-trick of awards for newcomer Susan Lodge, who joined the group after visiting last year's show and being impressed by the Scaynes Hill entries. Susan won second place for her cuddly toy sheep, third prize for her painting 'where sheep may safely graze' and highly commended for her wall hanging.

Jill Packham's fruit cake was awarded third prize, and Jean Sedgley was given second place for her poem.

Izzy Webster was thrilled to win third place for her colourful hand knitted fair isle jumper. "It's a copy of a jumper which I found many years ago in a charity shop and was well loved by my daughters," she said. "I

made my own pattern, keeping as near to the original as possible. My youngest daughter now wears it and is delighted!"

First time entrant Elinor Bourne designed and made a pretty sheep nightie for her granddaughter which was highly commended by the judges. "I was one of the few entrants who didn't make pyjamas!" she said. "I think that may have helped!" There was also a patchwork cushion made by Amanda Ridley and a beautiful crochet bag from Di Tipler.

Other members joined forces to create entries, including An Al Fresco Afternoon Tea display by Alda Christie, Sylvia Moss and Jo Britton, and a bouquet of handmade crochet flowers, which involved most of the members.

New members are always welcome at the thriving Scaynes Hill WI – and you don't have to live in the village to join!

For more information contact Secretary Fiona O'Leary on 01444 891217, President Sue Minter 01444 831786 or visit the Scaynes Hill WI Facebook page.

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Thank you

By Jane Harding, Royal British Legion
The Lindfield Branch of The Royal British Legion would like to thank everyone for their support and generosity at our two recent events.

With your help and donations we raised the wonderful sum of £437.16 on our Village Day stall. A further £132 was collected in our Poppy Box.

Last month we held a Garden Tea in Cuckfield where £530 was raised with a further £12.62 collected in our Poppy Box. This was held in a marquee in the beautiful garden of Andrew and Maureen Winskill. Peter Swann and the Perdido Players Swing Band entertained us with a medley of music. We marked the commemoration of The Somme with two hymns, the Last Post, the Reveille and the exhortation They Shall Grow Not Old was recited.

Our thanks go to Andrew and Maureen Winskill, Peter Swann and his band and to everyone who helped to make this such a memorable occasion.



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How far can we go?

At Lindfield Life, we'd love to see our magazines going with readers to their holiday destinations. How far can you make the magazine go?

Why not sneak a copy into your suitcase and bring it out for a photo by the pool, in front of the town's 'welcome to...' sign or as a selfie next to a national tourist destination!

Whether it's home or abroad - we think it would be fun to see the magazine breaking past the West Sussex borders.

Share the photos with us on Twitter or Facebook (mention @LindfieldLife), or email in your snap to photos@lindfieldlife.co.uk

Sudoku #1

4				3			
	5	6		7			
	9			8			3
		9		7			3
	7				9		5
			3		4	2	
		1			4	7	6
	6						
5				2	6		8
							4

Find the solution in next month's magazine

Courtesy of <http://andrews-sudoku.blogspot.co.uk>

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Mid Sussex
GOLF CLUB

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Mid Sussex Golf Club, Spatham Lane, Ditchling, East Sussex BN6 8XJ

What's on in August

AT KING EDWARD HALL

AND ELSEWHERE

August

- 1st- **The Adventurers Art Club Annual Exhibition**
7th (Mrs Valerie Harvey 01444 455704)
- 4th **Lindfield Country Market** – 10am-11.15am
(Sheila Hobbs 01444 483396)
- 9th- **Antique Valuations and Purchases**
10th (Mr R E Newland - 07850 312166)
- 9th **Lindfield Afternoon WI Group** – 2.15pm
New members are very welcome
(la16wi@gmail.com)
- 11th **Lindfield Country Market** – 10am-11.15am
- 18th **Lindfield Country Market** – 10am-11.15am
- 25th **Lindfield Country Market** – 10am-11.15am

Please refer to the King Edward Hall notice board for additional information regarding the above events.

If you would like to hire the King Edward Hall please contact the Honorary Bookings Secretary for further information on telephone number 01444 483266 or by e-mail on bookings@kingedwardhall.org

Room Guides needed at Standen House

Staff at Standen, The National Trust owned property in East Grinstead, are on the search for volunteers to be Room Guides over the summer.

For more information contact the Volunteer Coordinator Bleau Shanay Hudson on 01342 323029 or by email to: bleau.hudson@nationaltrust.org.uk

August

- 2nd **NHS Retirement Fellowship Mid Sussex Branch**
10.15am – Franklands Village Hall
Women Pioneers in Medicine by Yvonne Price
- 5th **A Midsummer Night's Dream** – 7.30pm
Cuckfield Recreation Ground
By Rain or Shine Theatre Company
Bring your own seating
(Tickets from 01444 451610)
- 7th **Musical Sundays at Borde Hill** – 1-3pm
Borde Hill Gardens. Entertainment for all the family includes woodland walks.
- 13th **Cuckfield Food Market** – 9.30am-12.30pm
- 14th **Holmsted Manor Open Gardens** – 1-5pm
Staplefield Road, Cuckfield
- 14th **Musical Sundays at Borde Hill** – 1-3pm
Borde Hill Gardens
- 21st **Musical Sundays at Borde Hill** – 1-3pm
Borde Hill Gardens
- 27th **Bring & Buy Horse Book Sale** – 2.30-5pm
The Adastra Hall, Keymer Road, Hassocks
Mid Sussex Area Bridleways Group
New & secondhand horse book sale for adults & children and enjoy a cream tea (01444 456145)

September

- 17th- **Lindfield Arts Festival**
18th Various events around Lindfield
(www.lindfieldartsfestival.com)
- 21st **Mid Sussex Decorative & Fine Art Soc** – 10.45am
Claire Hall, Haywards Heath
Lecture by Jane Gardiner on the Golden Age of Venetian Glass. Non members welcome.
(£7 on the door)
- 21st **Mid Sussex Franco-British Society** – 8-10pm
Function Suite of Clair Hall, Haywards Heath
First meeting of the new season of meetings

Our advertisers

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*Book by
8th August*

To reserve your space in the September issue of this magazine, published on 25th August, call Emily today on 01444 884115 or send your name, address and phone number by email to ads@lindfieldlife.co.uk

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