

Vol 19 No.7 February 2021

*united*  
**EASEBOURNE**



**Easebourne village and St Mary's Church magazine**

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Thanks to Val Carver for the winter scene on the front cover.

The editors welcome contributions from readers, as well as your comments and suggestions. Do you have a family event to announce? How are you coping during lockdown? Has your business been affected? Tell us about working and studying online.

The deadline for the March issue is Monday 15 February 2021.

[easebourne.united@gmail.com](mailto:easebourne.united@gmail.com) or Tel 816542

# Letter from the Vicar

Dear Friends

Our first readings set for the Feast of the Baptism of Christ on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January came from the opening chapter of the book of Genesis. Most striking, is God's speaking creation into being: 'and God said, let there be light, and there was light...'

The power of divine speech creates, and we the recipients of that creation enjoy its beauty and diversity. The point I made in my sermon that morning, was that we needed to embrace this creation during lockdown to help with our mental and spiritual state. Certainly, for me, in all three lockdowns, I have benefitted greatly from my daily exercise – and nature has not let me down in its enveloping beauty. Even on a cold grey January walk, one is struck by just how lucky we are to live in the midst of such awesome beauty.

When the psalmist wrote psalm 121, I often wonder what sort of situation they found themselves in. They write: 'I lift up my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come?' Looking up is very familiar to us – the Downs create a natural envelope to our lives. When I struggle, quite often looking up at the downs 'lifts my mood'.

This is the very creation that God spoke into existence, and if we listen too, we will hear its voice as nature and the noises of the natural world echo back at us.

I had to stop on my way to morning prayer one morning, as a Dunnock erupted in song from the hedge along the path. Such a small creature proclaims life, and I had to stop and give thanks. Whatever it is for you, that will get you through this awful time, hopefully the natural world will play its part. Snowdrops soon – and then spring!

I pray that all of us get through this time. I pray that those who struggle will find love and support from the wider community. I pray that the role out of the vaccine will return us to normality. But in the meantime, I pray that the 'Spoken Creation' will offer us comfort and some respite from our struggles.

'And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.'

Rev Derek Welsman



**VISIT OUR BENEFICE WEBSITE:  
[www.thepriorychurches.co.uk](http://www.thepriorychurches.co.uk)**

**The Benefice of ST. MARY'S PARISH CHURCH, EASEBOURNE**  
with St Peter's Lodsworth and St James Selham

**SERVICES AT ST MARY'S**

First Sunday 10.30am Family Eucharist  
Other Sundays 10.30am Holy Eucharist  
Wednesdays 10.00am Holy Eucharist

*Coffee is served in Church  
after the 10.30am service  
on most Sundays.*

*(Not during  
lockdown!)*

Morning Prayer: 8.30am most weekday mornings except Wednesday & Friday

**SERVICES AT ST PETER'S LODSWORTH**

Second Sundays 9.00am Family Service  
Fourth Sundays 9.00am Sung Communion  
First Sundays 6.00pm Evensong

**SERVICES AT ST JAMES SELHAM**

1st & 3rd Sundays  
8.30am Holy Communion

**During continued lockdown please check the churches' website  
for updates on the times of services.**

-----  
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Mrs Mary Knight 812783  
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200 Club Margaret & Mike Wharton 810474  
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Mrs Ann Harfield 813810

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(ring on alternate Thursdays from 7.30 – 9.00pm)

Social Committee  
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*Visit the benefice website: [www.thepriorychurches.co.uk](http://www.thepriorychurches.co.uk)*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Gospel</b>	<b>Reader</b>	<b>Intercessor</b>
7 Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup> before Lent	Proverbs 8:1 and 22–31	John 1:1-14	Wendy Trafford	TBC
14 Feb Next before Lent	2 Cor 4: 3-6	Mark 9:2-9	Jan Harling	TBC
21 Feb Lent 1	Genesis 9: 8 -17	Mark 1:9-15	David Christie	TBC
28 Feb Lent 2	Genesis 17:1 -7 and 15-16	Mark 8:31-end	Colin Datchler	TBC

## **CHURCH DIARY**

As you are all aware the rules regarding the Covid pandemic change rapidly and we have therefore decided that the church services will (for now) be advertised via our weekly bulletin and will also be available on the website ([www.thepriorychurches.co.uk](http://www.thepriorychurches.co.uk)).

If you are not receiving the weekly church bulletin by email please contact us via [stmaryseasebourne@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stmaryseasebourne@hotmail.co.uk).

### **Keeping St Mary's Church safe**

In this third lockdown it is a real blessing that churches have been allowed to stay open for services and private prayer, at the discretion of the incumbent and church wardens. In order to keep St Mary's church and those that use it safe, we have undertaken a further risk assessment, leading us to tighten up on and add more safety measures.

To this end, and following government guidelines, it is now vital and essential that you enter the church building with a mask and/or face visor already being worn. Also, please ensure that your mask is being worn correctly – covering both mouth and nose. Hand sanitizing is a must and we are asking you all to be aware of the 2-metre distancing rule at all times – as you enter and leave church and also when receiving communion. Once seated please remain in your place whilst you wait for the service to start. You will now find Roger in the porch as you arrive, to check on masks and to open the main door for you, so that only he touches the door handle, ensuring further safety.

Therefore, Roger and I will be being much more vigilant in enforcing these measures. Thank you to those of you who are coming to church for your own caution and vigilance, and for your patience and understanding. We are really grateful to you all for your support in following the above measures – they help to protect you and everyone else. These are difficult, worrying and trying times but by working together we can all do our best to keep St Mary's as safe as we can and open to all.

Thank you.

Roger Sked and Alison Davis, Church wardens

## Poet's Corner

### The Bleak Midwinter Lockdown by Sue Absolom

We're in another lockdown  
As bleak as the midwinter weather  
How do we reach for the stars  
When we're more battered than ever.

Restrictions are as taut as a drum  
And could even get more tight  
We know who we can turn to  
One who will bring us into the Light.

A light that burns so bright  
Our God is waiting to be asked  
So that He can enter into our lives  
It won't matter to Him if we're masked.

Has He not commanded us all  
To have faith and not be afraid  
He is with us throughout our trials.  
So be strong, do not be dismayed.

Our God is our refuge, and saviour  
In Him we trust and have hope  
And In His everlasting arms  
We will find the courage to cope.

As we struggle ourselves to adjust  
Think of those suffering ill health who  
Are waiting for other medical treatments  
They have more reason to struggle  
than we do.

As do the bereaved who have had  
To say goodbye to a loved one  
During this very difficult time  
Unable to celebrate a life well done.

Seek comfort in contacting family  
And friends and neighbours too  
Also those you think maybe lonely  
It will be beneficial to them and to you.

Take heart and all will eventually be well  
Then we'll be able to sing loud and clear  
Because our God will bring us safely through  
To, again, hug and kiss loved ones so dear.



#### **Coming to church when you cannot get out**

For those not able to come to church you can 'attend' online. Go to [www.thepriorychurches.co.uk](http://www.thepriorychurches.co.uk). At the bottom of the homepage you will find a link to this week's service, as well as links to the order of service, the weekly bulletins (pew sheet), and previous services, reflections and music. If you are in a care home, ask your warden for advice on how to take part. Get in touch with Derek if you need more advice. You will be very welcome! (See p. 2 for contact details.)

## The challenge of bringing church into our homes

by Anthony Knight

*"Where there is no vision the people perish" - Proverbs 29: 18*

The first Covid-19 lockdown resulted in the closure of churches. So it was with great pleasure that we were eventually able to attend services again, aided by the heroic efforts of the churchwardens and by observing mask-wearing and social-spacing rules. There were many parishioners who were not able to attend services because some were in specially-vulnerable categories, some in care homes, others preferring not to risk exposure to the virus. How could the church reach out to them?

Perhaps technology could help. Derek began a highly successful series of mid-week "VLOGs", filmed with a mobile 'phone. These have been a source of comfort, inspiration and information and could usefully be continued after the pandemic is over. Could the Sunday services be broadcast, perhaps on YouTube or Facebook, so that they could be viewed by those at home? Many churches and other organisations are successfully "live-streaming" their activities on the internet

using fairly simple equipment. Perhaps we could try this at St.Mary's.

We had access to all of the necessary equipment that allowed the simultaneous recording and broadcasting of high-quality sound and video. Experiments were conducted and it was found that live streaming would be possible, provided that a good link to the internet was available. There is no permanent 'phone or internet link at present in the church so it was necessary to use the mobile 'phone network linked by a portable wi-fi device. Problems immediately arose. Our first trials came during the Polo season in Cowdray Park which meant that the local mobile networks were heavily used and were difficult of access. Even when 'phone traffic was reduced the available bandwidth (data-carrying capacity) of the mobile link was not great enough or sufficiently reliable to guarantee the unbroken transmission of a church service. We needed a change of plan.



Derek suggested that there should be a mid-week service on Wednesdays, almost identical to that for the following Sunday. This would have two great benefits: first, numbers of worshippers at each service would be reduced, allowing for effective spacing in church and second, the Wednesday service could be recorded for public transmission over the following weekend. The video/sound recording could be edited before the end of the week, then uploaded to the church website, Facebook and YouTube.

The first experimental recordings were made with all of the equipment at the front of the church so that there were no cables crossing areas where people might walk. The first broadcast services were well received: we even got a “thank you” message from Crete! There were minor difficulties. The angle of the camera shot was towards the brightly sunlit corner of the church and the weather was always good. This meant that the camera wanted to “stop down” to accommodate the bright background. The placing of the microphones was not ideal, especially when Derek moved to the lectern for the readings and sermon. It was decided to try filming from the back of the church. This raised other problems. The microphones needed to be close to the “action” but we could not run microphone cables safely

from the front to the back of the church. They could be radio-linked to the video camera but there was a risk of interference with the church PA system. A separate sound recorder was therefore needed, close to the microphones. This also raised potential difficulties. It would be necessary to synchronise the sound and video recordings during the editing process. The microphones were “phantom powered” by the sound recorder but that caused a drain on batteries, so the recorder had to be mains-operated. Fortunately, modern recording technology is digital. In the old days it would have been necessary to cut and splice recording tapes; now the editing is much easier so synchronisation can be achieved. It helps if, during the service, Derek puts something firmly down on the table so that the “clonk” can be matched with the video recording. We can’t really use a film studio-style clapper-board!

We have had good feedback about the recorded services, especially since the camera was moved to the back of the church. It seems that viewers like to see the members of the congregation, even the backs of their heads. There are still some problems, especially with the sound levels when speakers, or readers drop their voices or speak indistinctly. This is a

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## from The Social Gang

Afternoon Tea Attendees - We have now celebrated a Lockdown Christmas and a Lockdown New Year, so let’s all hope and pray that 2021 will soon get better. The Gang are all missing seeing you and enjoying an afternoon of chats and laughter, and we sincerely hope that it won’t be long before we all get together again. Meanwhile, our very best wishes and love, and remember KEEP SAFE.

The Social Gang (Gill, Gladys, Hilary, Tony, Jan, Jane B, Sue)

# News from the Cowdray Estate

Jonathan Russell, CEO



# COWDRAY

## The Cowdray Woods

The woods at Cowdray have always been a key feature of the Estate both through scale and diversity but also as historical features, recreational areas and importantly their commercial contribution. Cowdray has a long tradition of achieving the highest standards in forestry management with the enterprise currently directly employing a team of 12 with secondary roles created for a significant number of contractors, professionals and processors. To an extent the scale of the operation is a direct result of the fact that the woods cover approximately a third of the Estate, some three times higher than the national average. However of equal importance has been the commitment to sustainable and productive forestry by the respective Viscounts Cowdray. This is especially true today as we all benefit from the current Viscount Cowdray's commitment to the woodlands during some commercially challenging periods over the past 25 years during which a large number of woodland owners simply gave up proactive management.

Our management objectives are simple in terms of managing the woodlands for the production of sustainable quality timber but at the same time enhancing biodiversity and



the environment, and maintaining a valuable space for leisure and recreation. Whilst simple objectives, achieving a balance between the demands of nature and users is both complex and much debated by various interest groups. In species terms we grow over 53 species of



trees split between approximately half being coniferous, a quarter being broadleaf and, the remainder being coppice and mixed woodland. Species selection is a direct reflection of soil types, topography, climate and more latterly, disease and climate change resilience. Most will have noticed the unique difference created between species from the quietness of the Pine plantations on the sandy soils to the wildness and scale of the broadleaf woods on the chalk Downs.

In statistical terms we aim to produce approximately 15,000 tonnes of timber per annum which is sold to a variety of markets ranging from construction through to low grade chip wood serving biomass power stations. All felled areas are immediately restocked and the team plant up to 60,000 trees per annum during the late winter/ early spring.

In addition to primary production, the team convert timber at our sawmill to create products as diverse as softwood sleepers, fencing materials, cladding and charcoal. We view this as a significant growth area as the demand for direct from source, accredited, sustainable and locally grown timber increases.

Environmental improvements continue to be a key focus ranging from management of the existing features such as the Sites of Special Scientific Interest, the Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the woodlands areas such as Bronze Age burial sites and the local Nature Reserve Sites. We further undertake regular species targeted projects such as habitat enhancement for the endangered Pearl Bordered Fritillary butterfly or the rare Smooth Snake both of which are now well established on the Estate.

Whilst less glamorous, the management of invasive non-native species such as Rhododendron, Laurel, Bamboo, Himalayan Balsam, Gaultheria and Japanese Knotweed is a constant battle and too often these arise via the dumping of garden waste.

Tree diseases now represent one of the greatest challenges not just to the Estate but all of the country's woodlands. There are relatively few species which have escaped some form of disease with some going relatively unnoticed and some having a catastrophic effect such as Ash Die Back which is significantly changing some of our most recognisable vistas together with creating risks to property and the public. Disease threats combined with climate change are forcing foresters to re-think species and it is likely that we will witness a significant evolution with species from Southern Europe such as Italian Oaks

(*Quercus franetto*) and the US such as Hickory (*Carya ovata*) supplementing our indigenous stock. The Estate will continue to work closely with the Forestry Commission in the development trial plantings for new tree species to increase our resilience to disease and climate change.

The important need for woods to provide a place for recreation and solace, sharply brought in to focus during the past year, further creates challenges as we attempt to achieve a balance between timber production which is a highly mechanised activity, traditional sporting activities and more modern pursuits such as mountain biking and trail running. The Estate benefits from over 170 km's of footpaths and bridleways and whilst there should be room for everyone, so often activities are concentrated on small areas. The Estate works closely with the Forestry Commission who authorise our works in the same way as the Local Authority would grant a planning permission. We consolidate management strategies in a 'Long Term Forest Plan' which provides a framework for our activities over a 15 year period. We are currently updating this Plan for consultation with the Forestry Commission for the period 2021 – 2036.

We take great pride in how much the Cowdray woods contribute to the Estate's wide ranging objectives. Their importance will continue to grow and evolve as we see them playing a significant role in identifying solutions for climate change by way of carbon sequestration and other methods. This could ultimately see the woodlands grow in size as their importance and significance grows.

## Covid-19 Vaccine Rollout plans for Midhurst Area

### Riverbank Medical Centre

As we go to press (20 January) our local surgery has already started vaccinating patients registered at Riverbank, beginning with those over the age of 80. It is important to note that patients will be contacted by the NHS when it is their turn to receive the jab. Please do NOT phone the surgery. More up to date information is available at:

[www.riverbankmedical.co.uk/covid-19-vaccination](http://www.riverbankmedical.co.uk/covid-19-vaccination)

### Midhurst Memorial Hall Vaccination Hub

Midhurst Pharmacy has worked with NHS England to set up a vaccination hub in the centre of Midhurst. The Pharmacy will receive vaccine soon and will be able to start to give the jab starting on Saturday 30 January (between 8.00am and 8.00pm). They will eventually have the capacity to vaccinate up to 900 per day, deliveries permitting. If you have received an invitation from the NHS by post for a COVID 19 vaccination you should if you wish be able to select the Memorial Hall to receive your jab, and book a date and timeslot. There will be other options to receive the vaccine but this will be specified in the invitation letter. You can park in North Street car park, but do not arrive too early at the Memorial Hall as there is no waiting area. Please do NOT phone Midhurst Pharmacy.

### How, When and Where can I get my vaccination?

The National Immunisation Management Service of NHS England co-ordinates this for everyone resident in England or registered with a GP. This service runs a centralised booking service from which invitation letters will be sent out to people in order of their vaccination priority.



It is understood that all the bookings for the Memorial Hall Vaccination Hub will be managed in this way. Alternatively you may be contacted directly by the Riverbank Medical Centre for an appointment if you are registered there as has happened for patients over 80 years of age. Whether you have been called directly by Riverbank or have booked your own appointment in response to receiving a letter from NHS England, your vaccination record will be uploaded to a centralised database for the whole population of England. There will be checks in the system to ensure everyone has been contacted and has made their choice. So please be patient and wait for the NHS to make contact.

This is only the beginning of a programme for the whole of the adult population of the country and we express our gratitude to Riverbank and the Midhurst Pharmacy for their efforts in implementing this programme for Easebourne, Midhurst, and the surrounding villages. By the time you read this many of us, especially the over 70's, will already have received their jab.



## WELLBEING AT COWDRAY HALL

Cowdray Hall & Therapy Rooms is a well-established centre for wellbeing. The centre focuses exclusively on inspirational workshops and events, weekly classes and one-to-one therapy sessions which promote self-development. At a time when the importance of holistic health is widely acknowledged, the centre provides a place where visitors can relax as well as focus on wellbeing.

Alongside Cowdray Hall sits three beautifully appointed Therapy Rooms for hire offering an accessible yet private space for a wide range of practitioners. From part-time therapists looking for a room with less commitment, to full-time professionals looking for a permanent home, we have pricing options which cater to all.

For further information on classes and events at Cowdray Hall and for more details on Cowdray Therapy Rooms, please visit:  
[www.cowdray.co.uk/wellbeing/](http://www.cowdray.co.uk/wellbeing/)

t: 01730 812423 e: [therapy-rooms@cowdray.co.uk](mailto:therapy-rooms@cowdray.co.uk)  
Cowdray Hall & Therapy Rooms, Parkway, Easebourne,  
Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 0AW



### Easebourne Park Sculptures

After much consultation with WSCC, SDNPA, the Cowdray Estate and St Mary's Church, the feral conifers, in the north-east corner of Easebourne Park, were dropped late last year. As the Parish Council had ambitions to have some trunks turned into appropriate carvings, the stumps of the largest trees were left and the search for a tree carver began. We were lucky to find local skilled chainsaw sculpturer, Nathan Blatherwick, who has now started turning these stumps into carvings. The subject of these carvings was agreed with Easebourne Church of England Primary School and was to animals whose names are used for the primary children's classes, namely Badgers, Foxes, Hedgehogs, Otters, Rabbits, and Squirrels. In addition, the insect class names of the Easebourne pre-school classes were also to be carved. These are Bumble Bees, Caterpillars, Dragonflies and Ladybirds. As you have seen, the largest stump has already become a fairytale castle! It is amazing what has been achieved already, as the project has some months to go before completion. And all with a chainsaw! The Parish Council has plans to enhance this corner of the Park further by planting a small orchard of native Sussex fruit trees to compliment the tree sculptures.

Parish Newsletter By now you should have received the annual newsletter from the Parish Council reviewing our activities

in 2020 and plans for the year to come. If you've not received one and would like a copy, please contact our parish clerk.



### Development sites

As you may know, three sites within the Parish have now been approved for residential development within the SDNPA Local Plan, which was adopted by the Government in 2020. The sites are being developed by local construction

company Metis Homes, with up to 60 properties across the three locations.

The Parish Council is one of many statutory consultees that will be asked to comment on the plans when they are available. The detailed applications will be dealt with by the planning team at the SDNPA. We are already in communication with the developers and will continue to be so throughout the project. Please be assured that there will be opportunities for all residents to view plans and express comments or concerns. The Parish Design Statement project which has been lead by a team of residents is very nearly complete and the conclusions contained within that document will be taken into account by the developer and the planning authority.

To follow the progress and to make sure you are aware of your opportunity to comment, please check the Parish Council website and follow our Facebook page for updates.

## **Listed Buildings in Easebourne— Magnolia Cottage in Easebourne Street**

from the archives of the late John Stringer, contributed by Phil Stringer

Listed 26.11.87, Grade II

Formerly three cottages, now one house. C17. Uncoursed stone rubble with red brick dressings. Tiled roof. Casement windows. Doorway with modern gabled hood. Two storeys. Six windows. Listing NGR: SU9021623108



(Continued from p. 6)

known phenomenon: when people see a microphone, for example, the one on the lectern, they assume that everyone will hear them if they speak quietly. Unfortunately, the sound system has to be set up to accommodate the loudest expected signal level and cannot easily be boosted without causing acoustic feedback. At our last church we had a formidable lady aged over 100 years. She was known to interrupt sermons with “speak up young man!” We need a public speaking training course in church.

The Wednesday recordings are down-loaded from the camera and sound recorder to a computer and are then processed with specialist software that allows the combination of the video and sound signals. Images and captions are added, as are pieces of organ music and occasionally choir items. Original recordings of over 25 GByte per service are processed and edited down to a size and format suitable for You Tube. The resulting sound and vision file, now about 1.5 GByte, is carefully checked (how many times have I heard that sermon?) before it is uploaded, on-line, to YouTube. Lynne Todd then publishes it on the church website and Facebook pages.

Our 2020 Carol Service was, unfortunately, only “virtual”. Recordings were made, using the same equipment as is used for weekly services, in a variety of locations in Easebourne, Lodsworth and Selham. We recorded carols by the Choir in St.Marys, by the Music Group in St.Peter’s. and by Deryck and Frances in St James’. The readings were done by a farmer, a head teacher, inn-keepers, a shop assistant, a churchwarden and, of course, the Vicar. Some problems were experienced with lighting, noisy traffic, loud talking during recordings, wind noise and some rather strange translations of familiar Biblical passages. The resulting programme is still available on the website, Facebook and YouTube, as are all of the earlier recorded services and Vicar’s Vlogs.

Our experience of recording and broadcasting services has taught us a great deal and has significantly increased the outreach of the church to those unable, because of age, illness, distance or Covid restrictions, to attend our services. When life returns to normal we might consider developing the techniques as part of the normal work and witness of our church.

## Birch Trees Nursing Home

Usually during the festive period, Birch Trees is a hive of activity, visitors and of course, the annual visiting Christmas show. This year, we had to do things a little differently as we were unable to allow access to anyone except allocated family members. Under the direction of our activities coordinator Vee, we decided to put on our own Christmas panto. Vee wrote the script, Steve our maintenance man built the set and one of our talented carers Beth created the backdrop. We were then all allocated parts either on the stage or behind the screens.

On the day of the pantomime, those who were on the stage changed into their costumes (our Operations Manager Andrew donning a fabulous dress and glittery high heels!) while the residents were brought in to take their places. I

think it is fair to say that much fun and laughter was had by all! For those interested, our efforts were filmed and uploaded to our Facebook page @Victoriabirchtrees. Please take a look!

We had one more surprise that day. We were joined by the Managing Director of Victoria Nursing Group, Paul Burns, who came to award the staff at Birch Trees Victoria Nursing Group's Home of the year! He presented us with a lovely glass plaque, which is on display in our entrance hall.

As we move on into 2021 and the Vaccine rolls out, let us hope that it is a much better, healthier and more sociable year for us all.

**Sarah Darnell, Care Practitioner**  
**Birch Trees, Hollist Lane T: 01730 813260**  
E: [sarah@victorianursinggroup.co.uk](mailto:sarah@victorianursinggroup.co.uk)



## Ron Wakeford 1943–2020

Ron was born in Lodsworth – a true Sussex country boy working out in the fields to help with the harvest and at home helping in a large vegetable garden, pigs and chickens, and an orchard. His love of Cubs and Scouting began as a child with Miss Buss as part of the Lodsworth Pack.

Ron was a bricklayer by profession and used to ride his motorbike down to Bognor for his 5-year apprenticeship. As a young man he and a mate used to go to the local pubs and dances. He was also keen on motorbike scrambling. He met his future wife Daphne in Worthing in 1965. They courted for four years and used to love going dancing, to the cinema, darts in the locals, and ten pin bowling before their marriage. In 2019 the whole family gathered to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary.

Ron and Daphne took a leap of faith when they applied to join a self-build housing project in Easebourne in 1973. As a bricklayer he was in! As part of the team, led by Denis Bicknell, they used their building skills to build six semi-detached homes in Highfield Close. Their children Sarah and Mark grew up in the house built by Ron and where Daphne still lives. Ron was involved for about twenty years in the Scouting movement, initially as a Cub Pack leader and later to re-start the 1<sup>st</sup> Easebourne Scout Troop.



But Ron became seriously ill in 2001 with a rare neurological condition called Guillain-Barré Syndrome – that on top of the rheumatoid arthritis that had troubled him since he was in his thirties. Despite his illness and disability he learned to walk again and eventually got out in the garden

where he started seriously growing vegetables and sweet peas. He joined Easebourne Garden and Allotment Society in 2010 and from the beginning started entering his produce competitively. Over the years he won many cups and trophies, and was three-times winner of the coveted RHS Banksian medal for horticultural excellence.

Latterly he enjoyed his time with Rother Valley Together at the Grange Centre where he met up with friends and enjoyed games and crafts such as pottery.

His family tells that Ron's passing will leave a very large hole in their lives but they hold on to the memories of many happy times of summer holidays, games at Christmas time, and walks in the woods. It was a great sadness for the family, now including three grandchildren, that they could not be with Ron at the very end. He passed away in December. Few could attend the funeral but many of his friends paid their respects as the hearse proceeded slowly past the house he had built nearly 50 years ago.

Contributed by Ron and Daphne's daughter Sarah

## Stephen Rushworth 1936–2021

Stephen grew up in Woking, starting early at Woking Grammar School before going on to the Caterham School. At 18 he did his 2-year National Service with the Gunners, giving him the chance to go abroad – in his case off to Hong Kong. He carried and fired heavy mortars around the Colony and ran up and down mountains after the Gurkhas.

After his return to the UK he went up to St John's College, Oxford where he read history.

Jennifer was one of a large family, also in Woking. She and Stephen met when they were both children but they didn't marry until 1960 when he came down from Oxford. They bought a tent from Millets for £5, borrowed a car from the inlaws, and had a lovely July

holiday in the Lake District. Stephen's first job was with ICI in Manchester, and he ended up spending his entire career with ICI. They moved into their large Victorian house in Dodsley Grove in 1968 when he was transferred to Plant Protection in Fernhurst. By that time they already had four children – Julia, Nicholas, Emma and Giles. The Rushworths quickly became involved in village life. The children all went to Easebourne Primary School and then to the intermediate school. Stephen and Jennifer both sang with Midhurst Music Society. Stephen was also involved with amateur dramatics. A happy surprise for the family was Daniel's arrival in 1978.

Stephen retired early from ICI in 1989. He

did a TEFL course in order to teach English to foreign adults – they often had students staying in their house. Stephen was also a keen gardener and he was known for the nice wine he made from his garden produce and from hedgerow gleanings. They used to travel all around Europe in their caravan when the children were

young, and later they enjoyed lots of adventure holidays to places like China, the Middle East, the Baltic States and Nepal.

Stephen and Jennifer continued to live in Easebourne until 2018. Unfortunately, they were both challenged with ill health. Stephen was diagnosed with dementia that



brought progressive physical and mental disabilities and Jennifer had physical disabilities linked to her serious stroke in 1999. So they had to ultimately retire from their many community activities. They managed for some years with live in carers at home, but eventually decided to move to a specialist care home. They chose Avonpark near Bath because Julia and Dan and their families live nearby and they and the grandchildren have been able to visit regularly. It is also a beautiful place for the rest of the family to travel to, to visit individually and to meet up for big family gatherings such as at Christmas. Stephen died peacefully on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January from his long illness and the frailty of old age. Jennifer has the room next door so

was nearby and Julia, Dan and a priest were able to visit his bedside in his last hours. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions, Giles, Nick and Emma were not permitted to visit. Given lock down rules we plan only a very small service now, but hope to have a proper memorial service and celebration of his life when the country is released from the current restrictions.

Contributed by Giles Rushworth

**FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S 200 CLUB  
December Draw winners**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Prize - £100</b>	<b>No 240</b>	<b>Patrick Savage</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize - £75</b>	<b>No 46</b>	<b>Linda Chapman</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize - £75</b>	<b>No 43</b>	<b>Marian Bradley</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize—£50</b>	<b>No 132</b>	<b>Anthony Nelson</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize—£50</b>	<b>No 146</b>	<b>Chris Barrett</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize—£50</b>	<b>No 161</b>	<b>Bryan Pierce</b>



**January Draw winners**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Prize - £100</b>	<b>No 25</b>	<b>Mo Knight</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize - £75</b>	<b>No 75</b>	<b>Alan Austin</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Prize - £75</b>	<b>No 161</b>	<b>Dr T B Pierce</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize—£50</b>	<b>No 70</b>	<b>Ouvaroff family</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize—£50</b>	<b>No 196</b>	<b>Judith Allen</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Prize—£50</b>	<b>No 79</b>	<b>Bob Lewis</b>

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Please note, winners will receive monies by bank transfer.



**Midhurst Angels**

The Midhurst Angels are a group of local volunteers, including members of Midhurst Town Council, community

groups, local churches and charities. Their purpose is to help the community during this period of isolation. They can help support anyone struggling through the pandemic whether with grocery and prescription deliveries or with guidance on financial support, or even just as a friendly voice at the end of the phone. Tel 07538 839703.

Website: [midhurstangels.co.uk](http://midhurstangels.co.uk). Email: [midhurstangels@outlook.com](mailto:midhurstangels@outlook.com)

**Midhurst U3A** is hosting a talk via Zoom on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February at 2.30pm. The speaker is the magician Bertie Pearce and the talk is entitled "We are amused" - Victorian leisure from the parlour to the seaside via the nursery. Apply by e-mail to [midhurstzoom@gmail.com](mailto:midhurstzoom@gmail.com) for an invitation.



# ? **General Knowledge Quiz** looking back to 2020

*Compiled by Carole Sawyer*

1. Whose statue was torn down and thrown into Bristol Harbour?
2. What is the name of Joe Biden's wife, who became the First Lady in January 2021?
3. What is the name of the man who cheated in Who Wants to be a Millionaire, the scandal that was turned into an ITV drama called Quiz, in 2020?
4. Which celebrity did Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis ask questions to in a video released by Kensington Palace?
5. Which music festival has had to postpone its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations to 2021?
6. Which city was due to host the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games?
7. What date was the first UK lockdown announced by Boris Johnson?
8. Name the scheme that ran throughout August 2020 to encourage people to enjoy meals in restaurants, cafes and pubs?
9. What song, covered by Captain Tom Moore and Michael Ball, reached No. 1 in April 2020?
10. Who was the only woman shortlisted for the 2020 BBC Sports Personality of the Year award?
11. During her April 2020 special address, the Queen referenced a wartime song. What is it called?
12. During the first lockdown, what day and time did people head for their front doors to clap for NHS and key workers?
13. Who became the first artist since 1981 to win the four major categories (Record of the Year, Album of the Year, Best New Artist, Song of the Year) at the 2020 Grammy Awards?
14. Including Donald Trump, how many presidents have been impeached?
15. Who became the nation's PE teacher during lockdown?
16. Which football team won the Premier League to end a 30 year drought?
17. At the very start of 2020, which country experienced devastating bushfires in every territory?
18. Two members of the Royal Family stepped down from their roles; what were their official titles?
19. At the beginning of 2020 England's cricket team played against South Africa. Who claimed the three final wickets, leading his team to victory?
20. Who said "Tis the season to be jolly careful'?

Answers on page 23



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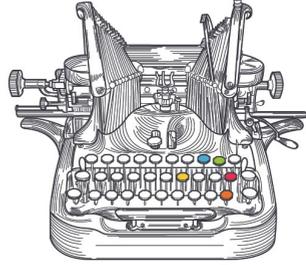


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## Taking on the new year, together.

It's been a challenging year so far, not just for schools but for everyone, as we enter in to the third national lockdown. We want to begin by thanking each and every critical worker for all that they are doing, and for working tirelessly to help our communities through this pandemic.

The wonderful community at Conifers School has been doing all that they can to keep the children motivated, enthused as they explore even more new and exciting ways to love learning. With just a moment's notice, staff remodelled their

## CONIFERS SCHOOL

curriculum to teach lessons online and with even more experience than last time, children from Reception through to Year 8 are enjoying a full online programme. Conifers pupils are benefitting from the best education and care possible in these times.

In the PE and Sport department, they too are adapting their lesson plans allowing the children some active off screen time. Forms 3-8 have been set a distance challenge using the fitness app Strava to keep active during lockdown. As a community they have set themselves goals to cover a distance together. Whether it's a dog walk, a run round the park or a weekend bike ride - every little counts!

Reception class were set a Design Technology challenge - to create a polar bear puppet! Continuing with their curriculum, the children have been learning all about Winter and the polar caps this term - they have had a super few weeks of online learning so far!



In the early years, children spend a minimum of 2 hours a day in their virtual classroom.

The older children have a full time-table, as if they were in school.



## Easebourne Primary School



As I write this, we have just completed the first week of the 2021 Lockdown, moving from child-directed teaching to teacher-directed teaching after two days.

Unsurprisingly, the staff were exhausted, trying to teach the significant number of vulnerable and critical worker children they had in front of them in the classrooms whilst also ensuring that the majority of the class at home were also learning. At a remote meeting of local primary headteachers earlier in the week, it had been clear that this was typical of what colleagues across the Rother Valley were experiencing. It seems like an age ago that we were doing our best to celebrate Christmas with the children!

Back in December, our youngest class, Dragonflies, dressed up and performed 'A Warm and Fuzzy Christmas Story'. Sadly, they couldn't have an audience; however, they did film the performance so they could send it to their grown-ups! They did the actions to 'Grumpy Face', 'Away in a Manger', 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star' and 'Jingle Bells'. They really enjoyed dressing up and performing on the stage, as their comments showed - "I was so excited to dress up as a camel!"

Meanwhile, pupils in KS1 were busy preparing a bubble-friendly, 'Children of the World', a charming Christmas musical, which followed Gabriel and his angels as they brought children from all around the world to meet each other at the manger, tell of their customs and offer gifts to the baby Jesus.

*My favourite part of the Nativity, was performing the dances Mrs Stevens taught us. I also really enjoyed learning my lines by reading the script over and over again at bedtime, instead of having my usual night time story.*

*I enjoyed learning to say 'Happy Christmas' in different languages.*

The children's hard work and determination really showed and we were incredibly proud of each and every one of them!

We were also very proud of our Eco-Committee last term for achieving Eco-Schools Silver Award and our new group, the Rights Respecting Schools Ambassadors, for achieving RRS Bronze Award. Both indicate that children at the school are taking responsibility for the world around them.

In another Christmas initiative, the scent of oranges filled the School as all of our classes joined Derek, our vicar, for our first ever whole school Christingle service. We were determined not to let COVID get in the way of our celebration of the true meaning of Christmas and arranged for each class to link via Zoom as Derek led us all through the processes, pausing as prayers written by children in Key Stage 2 were read out loud. Volunteers from St. Mary's Church kindly prepared packs of oranges, red tape, cocktail sticks, sweets and glowsticks in advance, which were delivered to the school last week so that everyone could take part.

Each Christmas for the last few years, we have organised a Reverse Advent Calendar and we saw no reason why this year should be any different. A supermarket trolley was left outside the school at the start and end of the day and each day in December, families left items that they felt would be welcomed by St Joseph's Refuge for the homeless in Chichester. Incredibly, with so much hardship in people's lives, the collection was more generous than ever and the charity was really pleased with what we delivered to them once term had ended.

On behalf of everybody at Easebourne, I wish you a safe and healthy 2021.

Johnny Culley, headmaster



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### General Knowledge Quiz Answers

1. Edward Colston
2. Dr Jill Biden
3. Charles Ingram
4. David Attenborough
5. Glastonbury
6. Toyko
7. March 23 2020
8. Eat Out to Help Out
9. You'll never walk alone
10. Holly Doyle
11. 'We'll meet again' by Dame Vera Lynn
12. Thursdays at 8pm
13. Billie Eilish
14. Three
15. Joe Wicks
16. Liverpool
17. Australia
18. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex
19. Ben Stokes
20. Boris Johnson ahead of the Christmas period

## Waterfowl at Benbow Pond

Have you seen the Egyptian Geese goslings at Benbow Pond? They must have hatched very close to the beginning of January and these six are thriving. In the March 2019 edition of United our local naturalist Mary Shotter wrote about how these attractive birds first came to Britain.

Another unusual bird is the Black Swan, a native of Australia which was also brought here back in 1791 as an ornamental species. There are four at Benbow. (In this shot the fourth one was busy chasing a resident Egyptian at great speed across the pond.)

The editors would be interested to hear from any bird watchers who can tell us more about these birds, and why there are so few Canada Geese to be seen any longer on Benbow Pond.





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**Midhurst Foodbank update**

December was a very busy month for the Foodbank - with donations coming in and going out at a huge rate! On Wednesday, 9th December, over 150 lunch boxes for schoolchildren in receipt of free school meals were delivered to their homes all across our area. This was a massive task and 60 volunteers took part. The day was dry and we had the support of our MP Gillian Keegan, who helped load the boxes into volunteers' own transport. Everything went without a hitch and all boxes were loaded and on their way by 11.00am.

Our warehouse has been full to bursting with donations of every kind. These came from our usual collecting baskets around the area but also from schools, private homes, churches, businesses and other caring groups of people - I cannot name them all in case I leave someone out, but we did have 30 Christmas Puddings donated to us from The Spread Eagle Hotel, beautifully wrapped and with the fascinating story of how the puddings were normally given to everyone staying at the hotel on Christmas Eve, which sadly could not happen this year.

Needless to say, those who received these wonderful gifts of money and food donations, and we as volunteers, were very moved by the overwhelming generosity of people in the Midhurst area which was both inspiring and heartwarming.

Now we are in January. The flow of donations has steadied but do look out for the collecting basket in our new Sainsbury's store. Those who need our help are still ringing us and we never turn anyone away. Sadly, as the pandemic continues, we are receiving calls for help from new people who have never needed our services before.

A huge thank you to everyone who has supported the Midhurst Foodbank in whatever way - it is much appreciated.

Sian Mitchell, Foodbank Volunteer



## Friends Of Midhurst Common

- Metis Homes have submitted a Planning Application for 75 new dwellings at the Bepton Road, WSSC depot and old Brickworks site. On 22 Dec we submitted a response to this, showing our concerns that we feel that this development would be detrimental to the stability and existing ecosystem within the contiguous area of quiet natural beauty and habitat particular to the Common in this area. Our full response can be viewed in the Chichester District Council Planning Application website
  - On 19 Nov, Kate from SDNPA was thrilled to spot two stonechats and a Dartford Warbler on the heathland
  - Heathland – on 1<sup>st</sup> Dec we were fortunate to have some input from the South Downs National Park Ranger Kate with heather management. She used a RoboFlail – a remote controlled Flail Mower – to cut back an area of heather in the middle of the heath area with meandering paths from that central
- area. These maximise the ‘edge’ habitat between mature heather and new fresh growth. This is particularly favourable to basking lizards and provides areas for ground-nesting birds which remain fairly secluded, especially from the many dogs which are walked nearby. See photo
- COVID-19 Govt. restrictions are again significantly curtailing our volunteer activities on heathland management. We managed a couple of bonfires to clear the silver birch and conifers removed earlier in the year. We will be out again when permitted with our ever enthusiastic leaders, Jean Hicks and Wendy Pegler
  - Thanks go to the Cowdray Estate who on 2 recent occasions have responded quickly to a request to remove large bits of potentially hazardous rubbish. Also to members of the public who continue to collect litter as they walk around the Common, despite the few who persist in creating it.

For more information:

[www.friendsofmidhurstcommon.co.uk](http://www.friendsofmidhurstcommon.co.uk)

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The Midhurst Society

### Facebook is growing and so are your Society's followers

Thanks to the unstinting efforts of Vice Chair Harvey Tordoff over the last couple of years and his *daily* newsfeed of local quizzes, personal observations and beautiful photos, he has created a following of close to 1000 - quite a milestone in a small town. The effort has been to get Midhurst and your Society 'on the map', and as a force to be reckoned with in local planning and local events. If you don't 'do Facebook' follow this link to see what Harvey is doing for Midhurst and the Society [www.facebook.com/themidhurstsociety](http://www.facebook.com/themidhurstsociety)

### Talks for 2021

We will constantly review our programme of Talks as circumstances change. The good news is that after our last very popular on-line presentation by Derek Welsman in December we have some recommendations...

On **Tuesday January 19<sup>th</sup>** Friends of the South Downs invite you to view their on-line presentation by Sir Charlie Raymond Burrell, owner of the **Knepp Castle Estate** West Sussex who will talk about the re-wilding of his lands. Click here to view. (There is a small charge.) <https://friendsofthesouthdowns.org.uk/public-events/> We have reviewed another series of one-man talks called 'The Bald Explorer'. There is one covering a walk around our town and Midhurst Common that you will find most interesting. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDDJQhM6CM8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDDJQhM6CM8) You can discover more of these talks on our website [www.midhurstsociety.org](http://www.midhurstsociety.org)

For **Thursday 21 March** we have tentatively reserved an exclusive presentation by **Ian Keable**. Baffling us with occasional magic and

comedy, this presentation will focus on Hoaxes. Links to this LIVE on line Talk will follow later, but please reserve the evening. For a taster of what's in store click here:

<http://www.iankeable.co.uk/>

Save the date **Thursday 17 June** for a talk by **Ian Gledhill** on "Stars of San Francisco".

### 2021 Membership Renewal

There is still time to renew, and remember the renewal fees have been specially set lower to compensate for the lack of Talks last year. To apply follow this link [www.midhurstsociety.org.uk/renew-membership/](http://www.midhurstsociety.org.uk/renew-membership/) or simply contact us at [chair@midhurstsociety.org.uk](mailto:chair@midhurstsociety.org.uk).

To all of you who have already renewed and new members, we thank you for your support. A particular thanks to those who have made such generous donations as well as their subscriptions.

### Midhurst Magazine for Autumn 2020

We hope you enjoyed the Autumn magazine. It's still available for £3 a copy at Spar/Post Office or Dummers. Contact us if you would like back copies. Issue 33 is already well underway - more updates on its progress next month...

Mike Balmforth, Chairman

*p.s. You can read this magazine online if you go to <http://easebourne.org/parish-history/parish-magazine/>*

*That way you can click on the hyperlinks.  
Ed.*

# Yew

by Michael Blencowe,  
Learning and Engagement Officer, Sussex Wildlife Trust



**Sussex**  
Wildlife Trust

Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus' famed donkey ride into Jerusalem. Recreating that palm-branch-strewn journey in Britain has been botanically challenging, since palm trees don't grow in our climate. Instead, churches gathered sprigs of native yew to provide the ceremonial décor and in some areas, the Sunday before Easter became known as Yew Sunday. And that's why every churchyard has a yew.



Well, actually the yew's churchyard connection is because yews are evergreen and can miraculously regrow from a dead stump. The trees were planted as a symbol of everlasting life and a reminder of the Easter resurrection. But, hold up; how come over 500 churchyard yews in England and Wales are older than their churches? It must mean that the yews themselves were pagan places of worship and the churches were built around them. Or they were planted on the graves of plague victims to purify the dead. Or it could be something to do with long bows. Or keeping the waiting congregation sheltered and dry each Sunday.

No-one seems sure where this association started but, whatever the reason, yews look right at home in churchyards. Dark, dense and unmoving they solemnly preside over the sad ceremonies held underneath their boughs and have seen generations come and go (but mostly go). Yews themselves deliver death and every part of them is highly poisonous; their

leaves, their bark, their seeds. Only the fleshy red arils around the toxic seeds are harmless, encouraging birds to feed on them and disperse the poisonous cargo within. Yet death itself does not seem to inconvenience the yew.

Two rival British yews are advertised as the oldest living thing in Europe, at an alleged 5000 years old. Not many yews in Sussex can rival these great

evergreen granddaddies. Most of our whippersnappers are probably just a couple of hundred years old. The problem is it's hard to accurately age a yew. As they get older, their blood red heart-wood rots, leaving them hollow inside and without traditional growth rings. Its heart may no longer be in it but that won't stop the yew from growing.

One of the oldest yews in Sussex can be found in Stedham churchyard near Midhurst. It's estimated to be a mind-boggling 2,500 years old. Over in Wilmington, at the foot of the Long Man, a monstrous yew dominates the churchyard. At a reputed age of 1600 the tree is 600 years older than the church. Supported by wooden props and straining against rusting chains, it's as if a travelling circus is exhibiting an aging dinosaur. It's worth a visit to both these old timers. For me, standing in the shadow of a plant that is 40 times older than you is humbling and a reminder that for us mere humans, life is brief.

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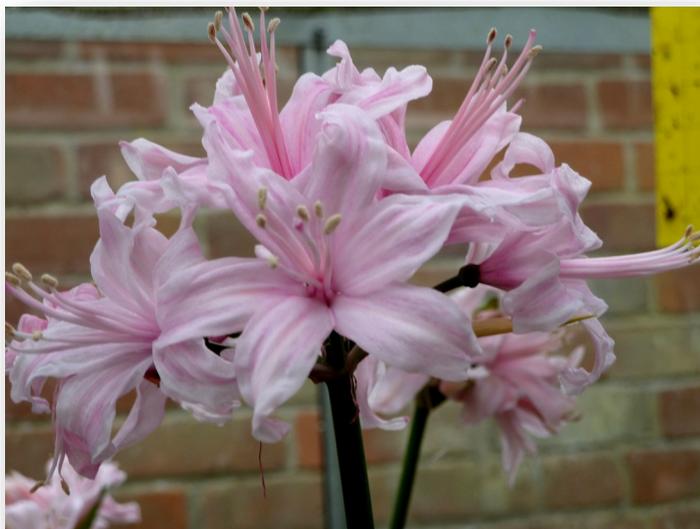
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## Snippets from a Gardener's Diary by John Humphris

### Nerines

As an apprentice I had regularly worked in glasshouses and every subsequent garden I had moved to had glasshouses and frames of various sizes and methods of heating. Mostly what was grown was a range of standard pot plants such as begonias, gloxinias, etc., and various bedding plants grown on in the spring for planting out later in the garden. So when



we moved to Borde Hill, with part of my brief to look after the glasshouses, I was totally surprised to find a range of pot plants I had never grown before. Not only were these unknown to me but there were two 60-foot greenhouses full of them.

*Nerine bowdeni* was a species I had seen in many gardens but I had never seen any of the tender species from coastal South Africa. The ones in the Borde Hill glass-

houses were *Nerine sarniensis*, known as the Guernsey Lily after a ship bringing them from South Africa was shipwrecked off Guernsey and they started growing on the coastal sands. Eventually more bulbs were shipped in and specialist growers and a few private owners began collections, and more importantly began hybridizing and raising new seedlings.

Lady Clarke at Borde Hill was one of the early collectors and gradually, with the head gardener Brian Doe, built up the collection with many of the seedlings named after local friends. One of the early hybrids was 'Stephanie' used regularly in hybridizing, and then 'Miss Eva Godman', named after her friend from South Lodge near Horsham, (now a hotel). This was a real breakthrough as it had great vigour and

increased quickly unlike many other hybrids. A later hybrid probably with Stephanie as one parent was 'Jean Ann', named after my wife who cut and packed the blooms, took them to the station at Haywards Heath, and put them on the train to London Victoria, where they were picked up by Pulbrook and Gould and also Constance Spry, both high class florists. They were highly prized for the foyers of the best hotels and I am indebted for the following descriptions from Patrick Synge's book on bulbs.

*'N sarniensis, the most beautiful species, large umbels of iridescent flowers on stout stems up to 2ft. Numerous varieties have been raised with wide petals varying in colour from white through pale pink and orange scarlet to purplish magenta. These iridescent flowers have a wonderful quality with the petals sparkling, especially under electric light. In consequence they are lovely as cut flowers and very long lasting'.*

Although the collection was unique and wide ranging, they were not being grown well and it was not until the new garden manager George Catt arrived. He had grown them previously and cultivation methods improved. It was a common mistake (and this is mentioned in many books) to let the pots dry out completely in the summer months when the bulbs are dormant and only start watering once the flowers appear in early September. Unfortunately, over a number of years this leads to a shriveling of the bulbs and the flowering is much reduced. Under our new regime at least once a week all the pots were sprayed over, and in very hot weather were given a weekly good soak.

This encouraged the bulbs to stay plump and most importantly keep their roots active. It was also suggested that they should be grown in a very sandy compost, which unfortunately also leads to weak shriveled bulbs. Our new compost was John Innes No 3 with added grit and a feed throughout the winter while in full leaf with Maxicrop fertilizer. Heating was kept to the minimum needed to keep the greenhouses frost free, with plenty of ventilation on mild days. Two years on the results were quite extraordinary, many more flowers on stiff long stems and large flower heads with intense colours.

Very few people had the chance to see the wide range of these tender nerines and it was suggested we have an exhibit at one of the RHS October shows at Vincent Square in London. Because they were cut for sale regularly with only one or two flowers open, it was rare to see hundreds of flowers in full bloom, especially in October, so this was a rare treat for the many visitors who had never seen them before.

John Humphris, 01730 810052



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