



Arrival of Spring

It's almost here, the long awaited prize,
Bringing optimism and joy, a time to reside
Out in the open so natural, so free,
Carpets of Primroses wait patiently.

The fragility of flowers so perfect and whole
Bringing pleasure to the eye, that warms the soul.
Daffodils, Snowdrops and the wild Bluebells
Hug abundantly together like seaweed and shells.

New life in its splendour, Mother Nature at her best
Delicate yet strong, a bouquet to caress
So what is this prize that may make us sing
It's the end of winter and the arrival of spring!



Village Contacts

Ambulance, Fire, Police **999**

Police Community Support 101
and non-emergency Police

PCSO - Richard Bradley
richard.bradley@kent.pnn.police.uk

Community Warden
Peter Gill 07703 454190

Peter.Gill@kent.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Watch
Sheila Smith 611580

Gas Emergency 0800 111999

Highways Fault Reporting
03000 418181

UK Power Network 105

Doctors Surgery 619790

The Market Place, Sandwich

Emergency out of hours 111

Parish Council

www.eastry-pc.gov.uk

www.facebook.com/EastryPC

Chairman: Mark Jones

Vice-Chairman: Deborah Russell

Clerk to Council

Mrs. Joanna Jones 01304 746036

clerk@eastry-pc.gov.uk

*Thornton House, Thornton Lane,
Eastry, Sandwich, Kent CT13 0EU*

C of E Primary School 611360

Head Teacher: Mrs. Sarah Moss

PTA Treasurer: Justine Crane

Eastry Ravens FC

Steve Booth 07864 925289

[email: 27srb@sky.com](mailto:email:27srb@sky.com)

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Eastry Horticultural Society - update

I am hoping that you all enjoyed your Christmas festive breaks despite the harsh limits placed upon us and our families as a result of being stuck in the dreaded Lockdown? I am sure that along with me the rest of the EHS Committee wish you all a very Happy, healthy and successful New Year.

Sadly there has been very little, ie nothing, happening in the general gardening world for the past few weeks. If like me your garden is pretty well permanently waterlogged at the moment there is very little that we can do other than buy our seeds and plan for what we hope will be ours in the spring. The grass has been too wet to mow, so I am now considering getting a herd of cows or something similar to do the job for me, sadly 'er in doors' is not greatly in favour of that solution. Over the dozens of years when I was regularly idolised as a Greek God I have been ravaged by many a young lady but none as viciously as the windy one named Bella who savaged our house and garden over the Christmas period, I really do hope that you all escaped her savagery.

The EHS Committee have arranged a few provisional dates for committee meetings with the hope of being able to get something going for all of you members in the not too distant future, so it is fingers crossed. Don't hesitate to take the vaccine when it is offered. I, along with several other of our club members worked at Pfizer for many years, 40 in my case, so we know that the vaccine they have issued is going to be well worth taking, it also helps to keep our pension rolling. I'm not trying to outdo Rose but I have sent a poem to help cheer us all up a bit!

Best wishes - John Surridge

The shape I am in!

Really, there's nothing the matter with me, I feel as healthy as I can be.

But, I have arthritis in my knees and now talk with a wheeze.

My pulse is weak and my blood is thin, but I'm really quite well for the shape I am in.

Sleep is denied me night after night, but I wake in the morning and find I'm alright.

My memory's failing, my head's in a spin but I'm awfully well for the shape that I'm in.

It's better to say I'm fine, with a grin, than to let folk know what shape we are in.

I know now that my youth is all spent, my 'get up and go' just got up and went.

But I really don't mind, I think with a grin of all the great places my 'get up' has bin.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits, I pick up the paper and check the Obits,
my name is still missing, so I know I'm not dead!

So I have a good breakfast – and go back to bed.

Anon

Kent Mobile Library - visit their website or call 03000 413131

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A Tribute to Iris Mollart - 1929 to 2020



The village of Eastry is in mourning after the passing of Iris Mollart one of its most loyal, devoted, dedicated, energetic and hard working residents. Born and bred in the village she lived most of her life here working for many years as a farmer with her father at Gore Court Farm and raising her three children.

Iris was ever a stalwart supporter of our most precious village serving on most and many committees and delegations, often in the chair. Dealing with matters as varied as helping the School to relocate to Cooks Lea and transforming its mobile (very unsuitable) classrooms into bricks and mortar, helping organise the **Eastry 1000** celebrations in 1979 and, with the help and support of many villagers, fighting for and promoting the need for a bypass - which was finally opened in 1991 making Eastry a nicer, safer community with much less traffic.

Elected as a Parish Councillor in 1968 she remained on the PC until she stepped down in 2007, becoming Chairman for the first time in 1972. Iris was always involved in most aspects of the village especially promoting and improving our environment. A Church worshipper she would take a very active part in the Churchyard and Cemetery Committee and, once again as Chair, she fought hard to keep that area the responsibility of the Parish Council, when it was suggested it might come under the jurisdiction of the District Council. Although the Parish Council had purchased machinery and hired two retired pensioners to maintain the Churchyard, the area was too difficult to keep up to scratch and it began to look unkempt and untidy. Iris was greatly relieved when the PC finally appointed contractors to look after it and maintain it.



Amongst these many other activities, Iris was very keen on keeping an eye on any new planning applications. Physically inspecting the sites, studying the proposed plans and making strong comments on anything she did not approve of or thought would be detrimental to the Village.

She encouraged the setting up of a Twinning Society and, with a delegation of interested Eastry villagers, looked to find a suitable village/town in Northern France. The French town of Longpre-les-Corps-Saints, on the picturesque River Somme, was picked to become our twin. Iris was involved in the initial Twinning Ceremony in 1981 and was so delighted that the Eastry Twinning Association is still thriving in the village today pursuing 'entente cordiale'.

Iris actively supported the village 'Communitis' Committee' particularly in 1979 which was the one thousandth anniversary of the signing over of the manorial rights of the Manor of Eastry from King Ethelbert. The Committee organised the celebration of Eastry 1000 and Iris managed to persuade the PC to sponsor a series of events over a short period and helped to organise most of them. There was an **Old Tyme Fayre**, a **Village History Exhibition** (with Jack Bones and Chris Martin), **'It's a Knockout'** between teams from local organisations and a **Special Pageant** presented in the Church in association with the school Headmaster John Gabriel, the PTA & Friends, with music by Mrs. Wright's pupils.

The Beating of the Bounds also took place with well over 100 parishioners, including Iris, walking the eleven mile boundary of our Parish and afterwards Iris presented everyone with a memento. To end these celebrations, on 30th September 1979, Iris and the other Parish Councillors met the Archbishop of Canterbury who preached at the Morning Service in St Mary's Church.

Iris was an active member of Eastry Primary Schools' PTA for many years and was delighted to be appointed to be a Governor of that School serving for some 30 years in that role. Using her hands on approach whenever possible she was a hit with pupils of all ages.



Unsurprisingly over the years, Iris has supported and joined many of the village groups. She was a member of the WI, a supporter of the British Legion and the Scouts and Guides (she loved the Scout's Band when it was in existence, leading all the special parades through the Village), the Youth Club and the former Young Wives and Mothers Union, to mention but a few.

For many years she served as a Trustee of the Greville Almshouses where the residents were always pleased to see her on her rota visits and she was party to the building of the three extra two bedroomed bungalows and the refurbishing of the 6 cottages as well as the many other improvements in recent times. The residents cannot believe how lucky they are to be able to live in such well kept palaces which Iris and her fellow Trustees regard with a great deal of pride.



When Iris was chairman of the Parish Council she realised that there was a need for the villagers to be able to get together and she proposed that the Parish Council should sponsor a weekly coffee morning in the Village Hall. This was approved and has been held on a Friday morning for the last 15 years and for 12 of those she actively worked in the kitchen with Parish Council colleagues to provide the refreshments. She was a member of the Village Hall Fund Raising Committee and helped to run the Bangers & Bingo and Craft Fairs for years.

Perhaps Iris's most prominent and outstanding village involvement establishing the free Eastry Village News magazine in 2005 (replacing the Church Magazine). Taking on the Chairmanship of this new venture, using her dedicated skills to organize the distribution of it to every house in the village (only retiring from the Chair last year) has been a big part of her great legacy.

This lovely lady and her energy and drive, her interest in, her dedication to and her passionate involvement within the village and the community she loved will be greatly missed by all the residents of Eastry for many years to come.

Thank you Iris and "Well done indeed" from the villagers of Eastry. (J.Waring)

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Eastry Church of England Primary School

With the Corona Virus affecting so many aspects of our lives, the head teacher at Eastry School, Mrs Sarah Moss, has had the daunting task of minimising the impact of national lockdowns on her pupils' education and wellbeing. Appointed to the position of head teacher at Eastry in February 2020, after having been the Deputy head at a school in Ashford, Mrs Moss had little time to get settled at Eastry school before the first lockdown was announced. Within a few weeks Mrs Moss and her staff were tasked with having to reorganise the school routines to meet the government's guidance. It has been such a busy time that Mrs Moss has not had an opportunity to introduce herself to the village and the wider community until

I have been teaching for 13 years. Before I started at Eastry, I was Deputy Headteacher at a bigger school in Ashford. It was a new school when I started there, so I got to set it up from scratch which was lots of fun. I am very excited about joining Eastry, I've been here 10 months now and I love coming into school.



It's been a very strange year for all schools but I'm enjoying the adventure so far. Here at Eastry, we are such a welcoming school. The children, families and staff are very friendly and care about each other. The staff and I would like to make Eastry the best school it can be for the children, which is fantastic. I think another strength is how well children settle into school when they start at Eastry, not just in fledglings (our reception class) but other year groups too. I think that's because we look at the whole child, getting to know them and nurturing them, enabling them to achieve their full potential. We also have great links with St Mary's Church, the children really benefit from the relationships they have with Revs. Sandra and David. In terms of our priorities- we want to make sure that any learning the children missed, due to the pandemic is caught up. We are also making better use of our amazing outdoor facilities establishing a forest school on site, which will enable all children to access once a week by September 2021.

Our school should be the heart of the community, which means we need to continue the good links with other organisations and facilities in the village. Sadly, Covid is inhibiting some of these at the moment, but we look forward to welcoming visitors and being more visibly present in the village in the coming months.



I am passionate about **every** child being included. I think getting education right early on helps set children up for a lifelong love of learning. Learning should be real for children, they should be actively engaged in the process. I love helping children to be curious and discover what they are capable of. In my spare time, I like to spend time outdoors, walking, running and kayaking with my family, including our dog Maddie (who is also our school dog!). Normally seeing lots of friends and travelling.

This term the School has welcomed two new members of staff - Mrs. Jackie Davies the new Year 4 teacher and Year 5 have welcomed Miss Sara Ward. Mrs. Tracy Inglis, who has taught at the school for the past eleven years, is taking up the role of Family Liaison Officer. These are difficult times for but the head teacher, staff and children at the school sincerely wish you and you all a happy new year and look forward to the time when we can interact more with our wider community.

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Rectors Letter

In 'normal' times, whatever they may be, the beginning of a New Year would be a time of looking forward and planning all sorts of events and occasions as the spring and summer approaches. This year, it is very different indeed. Whilst planning and preparation are of course always necessary, it is difficult to look too far ahead – it has become more a case of getting through the next week or two than worrying about what the next month will bring.

For some, and here we think particularly of key workers, life has taken on whole new demands and pressures – and we remain hugely grateful to them and recognise the extraordinary responsibility and stress which is placed upon them. However, life for many other people has meant an enforced slowing down – we are not allowed to travel far or socialise much and are largely confined to home. For a lot of people this has been extremely hard and isolating, but perhaps we can also try to embrace it as a chance to slow down, take stock and appreciate our homes, our hobbies and our environment.

For our churches life has become in many ways very different, but during this last few months two important lessons have been learned - or at least reinforced. First of all, there has been a deeper recognition of the simple need for human contact. A very fundamental part of our Christian understanding is that we, as humans, made in the image of a God of community, are meant to be in community. So to be apart from other people and lonely is a denial of our humanity. Both as a Church and as society, as a result of the pandemic, we have become more aware of those who are alone or isolated, and we have tried to respond as best we can. But this is a lesson we must carry with us. It is so easy to forget about, or ignore, those who are not able to engage or interact in a way that they once did. We must make every effort to ensure they are still included and valued.

Which brings me neatly to the second lesson learned – namely, how rapidly the Church (probably fairly change averse) has been able to adapt to very different circumstances and embrace new technology. Of course this transition has not been without its teething troubles and there is a lot still to learn and do, but the fact is that within a fortnight of churches closing we were live-streaming services, first from our homes and later from the church buildings when that became possible.

So if you thought the Church was a rather stuffy organisation stuck in its ways – think again. Of course, change is not necessarily good or helpful; but when it is important we have shown it can happen very quickly – and that is a vital lesson to hold onto. The embracing of 21st century communication has not simply meant that aspects of life can go on, but it has enabled those who otherwise would be left out to participate. People who are housebound can join our services either online or by telephone, and meeting together is possible for those who find it difficult to get out on a cold winter's evening. None of this is a substitute for human face-to-face contact or for human touch, but it is a means by which enhanced contact can be maintained and people included.

So two lessons for both the Church and society as a whole: first human contact is fundamentally important; and second, change is not just possible, but can happen very quickly when necessary. Let us not forget either going forward.

May this New Year bring us all renewed hope and purpose as we look forward.

David Ridley

**Please note that at this time your Eastry Woodnesborough
Benefice Church Contacts are:**

Rector Rev David Ridley
Tel: 01304 619619 email: davidridley@btopenworld.com

Curates Rev Sandra Marsh
Tel: 01304 612686 email: revsandramarsh@btinternet.com

Benefice Office Tel: 01304 611323 - ansaphone checked once or twice a week email: eastry.benefice@gmail.com (checked at least daily)

Details of our online Church Service are shown on the next page

Church Office - Tel: 01304 611323

Benefice Office, The Church Hall, Church Street, Eastry CT13 0HH
Wednesdays 10.45am to 12.45pm and Fridays 10.00am to 12 noon

Benefice Website

Please visit our website: www.EWBchurches.org.uk and share your thoughts on progress so far to - Revd. David Ridley or Michael Kinns.
The new website is regularly being updated.

NB there is also a new sub-page for "Eastry Church" on the Eastry Parish Council website which links to the benefice website.

Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/EWBchurches

Churches Open for Private Prayer*

Our churches are open for private prayer and reflection as follows:

Eastry: 9am to 5pm daily; **Staple:** 9am to 5pm daily;
Tilmanstone: 9am to 5pm daily;
Woodnesborough: 9am to 5pm daily;
Northbourne: 10am to 4pm daily.

*Subject to current Covid restrictions. Check Church website or Facebook for updates

Eastry kids say please SLOW DOWN!

CHURCH SERVICES IN EASTRY CHURCH

With high Covid infection rates locally and Tier 4 and lockdown restrictions, the Church may be closed for public worship. The situation is being regularly monitored and kept under review, **so may change at short notice.**

Please look at the Church website or Facebook page for updates.

ONLINE CHURCH SERVICE SUNDAY at 10am

To join, you will need to do one of the following:

Using a laptop or tablet, copy this URL in to your web browser
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On a smartphone, dial: (the commas are important)
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On a land line or old mobile phone, dial: 0203 481 5240 or 0208 080 6591
 When asked for your meeting number, enter: 7360055669#

Ignore the request for an ID – just press # again If you are asked for a password, it is 2 4 6 8 10

The Church Registers - Funerals

25/01/21 Iris Mollart

27/01/21 Walker Ogston (Barham)



Eastry Cares and Staple Helpline

Do you need a lift to an appointment or a prescription collected? Do you need shopping or would you like a friendly visit, a listening ear or help with form filling?

Call on: 07787 612238

Young People's Contacts

Young People's Club Dick Laslett (07702 459332) dicklaslett@yahoo.co.uk

Amateur Boxing Club Mac McCarthy (07749 760520)

Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers Sandwich divisiongg@gmail.com

Beavers, Cubs **Scout Leader:** Graham Baker
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Incy Wincys Joanne Barham (07593 504326)



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Spotlight on Rising Talent - James Laker (Speedway)

James' family have always been fans of Speedway racing, loyally watching Canterbury Crusaders at Kingsmead Stadium. Aged seven he would watch Speedway on TV and in 2010 he started going to watch the Lakeside Hammers Speedway team, just through the Dartford tunnel. Lakeside had an Academy and training track and in 2013 James spent a day there for his 12th birthday, enjoying it so much that he went several times. In May 2014 he got his first speedway bike with a 125cc pit bike engine, continued to go to the academy track and also rode with three other riders from the academy in demonstration races before Lakeside's main meetings and went to a training track at Lydd.



In 2015 he raced in the British Youth Championship for riders up to 16 years old, in classes based on engine size (125cc, 150cc, 250cc & 500cc) riding in the 150cc class. The 8 rounds took him round the country yet he still practiced at the Lakeside academy, Lydd and at Iwade tracks and still rode before meetings at Lakeside. In 2016 James got a 500cc speedway bike and aged 15 he entered the Lydd Club Championships in the B class, against adults, winning the class that day unbeaten.



In 2017 James rode in the British Youth Championship again and rode before and after meetings at Kent Kings home track in Sittingbourne. In the 2017/18 seasons he rode for Kent's junior team (Kent Kestrels) in the Southern Development League, winning the league in 2018 - still riding before and after the Kent main meeting. He went on to ride for Sittingbourne Crusaders in a 6 team tournament

over six rounds at Iwade. He captained the Weymouth Wildcats in 2019, riding his home meetings at Poole Speedway, topping the averages for Non National League riders and had guest bookings for various National League teams.

2020 should have seen James riding in the league for Eastbourne Seagulls, Crayford Kestrels in challenge matches and Sittingbourne Crusaders in a 4 team tournament. Opportunities were limited due to Covid 19 but hopefully the 2021 season will start at Easter and he will be riding for Eastbourne, Crayford and Sittingbourne, individual meetings up and down the country and some Grasstrack meetings. The league structure in British Speedway racing is similar to football. The top 2 leagues are professional and the rest are amateur. Riders are paid per point so the more points you score the more you get paid.

James is very grateful to all his sponsors - *Trevor Laker Engineering, Collard Plumbing Services, OORacing, Jan & Will Little, Sittingbourne Speedway (Iwade) Rob Racing, Godden Engineering, Peter & Barbara Mills, John Carpenter Services* - although he would welcome sponsorship from any local people or businesses. He also much appreciates the help he has received from his supportive family. James Laker, a naturally talented Speedway Racer, is going places. **Find out more at his Facebook page - James Laker Racing.**

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Eastry Neighbourhood Watch Report



These are critical times for the Covid pandemic. All in lockdown and really questioning whether we need to leave the home. Covid vaccinations are now being rolled out and no doubt we are all anxious to be near the top of the list. We will all be notified by the NHS when our time comes but be careful some fraudsters are offering vaccinations for payment - **THE NHS WILL NEVER ASK FOR PAYMENT OR PERSONAL DETAILS** so please do not get caught by these scammers. Fraud is all around us as criminals work hard to extract money by whatever means possible - often picking on the elderly and the vulnerable and always being quite forceful and frightening. Our KCC Warden advises that we should dial 101 to report these scams whether successful or not.

I dialled 101 just before Christmas and was told that Kent Police were very busy dealing with Covid and stranded HGV's and to use their website instead. If it is important wait on the line until you can speak to a member of staff. When eventually I did I was assured that help was at hand. I was reporting on behalf of a householder in Eastry who had replied to an advert for garden maintenance. The work was poor, the price exorbitant (CASH ONLY) and they returned again saying another £200 was owed. The householder contacted me asking for help and the Police assured me they would deal with the matter.

This is not expected in a small village but perhaps all the bungalows indicate to these criminals that there will be elderly and vulnerable people who may become easy targets. It is not only gardening that these scammers are involved, saying your roof needs urgent repair is another common one. There is also one about your National Insurance Number. **Do not be fooled.** We have many reliable trades people within and around the village and even if you have to wait a while it is much better and safer to use them. You will be able to get in contact with them again if there are problems again.

Please read the information on the next page on **scams and how to avoid them.**

Sheila Smith (Eastry NHW)

Some useful contact information for Senior Citizens

Citizens Rights for Older People - CROP

This is a free and independent advocacy service for older people (55+).

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Kent Fraud Alert System - Vaccine scams

Please be aware of fraudsters sending out emails and texts offering vaccines.
The following is an example of such a message that was received by
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**“NHS: We have identified that you are eligible to apply for your vaccine.
For more information and to apply, follow here:” (there is a link provided)**
**The link takes you to a page with an official looking NHS heading
on a blue background & headed ‘**

We need to prove ownership of address ‘

Please get a debit / credit card ready, you will need

Sort Code –

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Beacon View Vets Update

Hi everyone! We hope you are all well and coping with lockdown 3.0 We have had a busy few months since last writing and we are excited to implement our plans for 2021. Although we are unable to travel currently, hopefully we will be able to again in the not so distant future. Since Brexit the rules for pet travel have changed and the recognisable blue pet passports are no longer valid. Pets must now be issued with an Animal Health Certificate for travel to the EU and Northern Ireland. We know that a lot of you enjoy holidaying with your pets and we have put together the following 10 tips based on the current guidance released by the Government to help with planning any future trips to the EU.

- Pets must be vaccinated against rabies to travel. The vaccine must have been administered at least 21 days before a certificate can be completed.
- Pets must have a microchip before the rabies vaccination is administered.
- A certificate is required for each trip to the EU or NI.
- An Animal Health Certificate (AHC) can be issued a maximum of 10 days before travel.
- An AHC allows travel within the EU and NI for up to 4 months. Once a pet leaves the EU and NI the pet will require a new AHC
- Entry to the EU and NI can only be made via the country for which the AHC has been completed. If entry to the EU is via France, the AHC will be completed in French and English. Changing the country of entry will require a new AHC.
- The certificate requires a considerable amount of time to complete. It is therefore important that an AHC is requested in good time.
- There is currently no requirement for a blood test for rabies antibodies when travelling from Great Britain to the EU or Northern Island
- For most countries, dogs must be treated

We saw an amazing response to our Christmas Charity appeal, practically filling up our staff room with food and toy donations for Cats Protection: Deal and District Branch and Retired Greyhounds Canterbury. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of our clients and hope to plan many more charity events this year.

We have also started growing our own forest! We are proud to be a climate positive workforce and have partnered with **Ecologi** to help reduce our carbon footprint. We are offsetting our teams' CO2 output every month by funding the planting of trees in projects across the globe. Thank you for all your support in 2020, we now care for over 1800 local pets!

As always if you have any questions please get in touch by phone or social media channels. Wishing you and your pets a happy and healthy new year from all of us at Beacon View.

Claire

Mother Nature - May Morris 2020

Have you ever compared Mother Nature, against the efforts of the great?
 Who hang in famous galleries the Louvre or the Tate?
 Displayed in all their glory, no finer sight you'll see,
 A Grassie or Da Vinci, the sneaky Banksy.

Painted to perfection, a name of their own
 Revered for their talent, styles well known!
 Fine Art, Renaissance, and Street Art too
 A feast for the eyes, undeniably true

However, take a moment, cast your eyes and see
 Mother Nature with her palate a style known as "Free"
 A tapestry of colours, dancing in the rain
 Refreshing the dusty hedgerows, time and time again

The brightness of the moonlight, the crisp cold morn
 The setting of the sunset, the bright new Dawn
 She paints the world continually, will never make a fuss
 And unlike famous artistes, Mother Nature needs no brush.

The Pudding Cloth - Rose Beer 2020

No matter what the weather, come wind or rain or shine,
 that ragged bit of pudding cloth would be hanging on the line.
 I'd quickly hold my stomach and instantly feel sick,
 cos I knew what was for dinner, yes, another spotted dick!

"Get stuck in" my mum would say "it'll make you big and strong".
 It would lie there on the table...about 30 inches long!
 "Just a little piece" I'd say in a feeble little voice,
 but **'wallop'** it was on my plate. I rarely had a choice.

"Tomorrow for a treat" she'd say "we'll have jam duff instead".
 Tomorrow I'd be thinking, 'I think I'll stay in bed'.
 But coming home from school as sure as I could be,
 there was the dreaded pudding cloth for all the world to see.

Another day would come so I didn't dare complain
 cos what was left at dinner would be served at tea again.
 Now I devised a plan - I'd hide her cloth away.
 I couldn't face a suet pud another single day

But coming home from school I couldn't believe my eyes .
 I might have thought 'without her cloth she'll have to improvise'
 I searched the washing carefully dreading what I'd find.
 There was half a pair of bloomers hanging on the line
 Oh No, I thought, she wouldn't oh yes she jolly well would
 she'd used the other half to wrap the suet pud!!!

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Walks around Nonington and helpful technology

I don't know about you but I've done a lot more exploratory walking and photographing thanks to the virus. My heart goes out to those not so fortunate. Nonington is not very far from Easry and a quick check on google found an excellent source of information on over 20 walks of various lengths including maps <https://noningtonpost.wordpress.com/> put together by Charmaine Perrin who also leads the guided walks along with husband Roy. Go to the top of their page and choose 'self-guided walks'. Char is a member of Nonington Parish Council and a volunteer Countryside Access Warden, a scheme run by Kent

County Council to maintain public rights of way and encourage their use. She can be contacted via charmaineperrin@btinternet.com.

Here are a few of the photos:



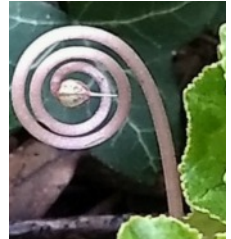
Ancient Horse Chestnut



Acorn Cup



Common Puffball Toadstool



Cyclamen shoot



Calocera fungus



Robin's pincushion gall

I have done some routes around the beautiful Fredville Park which has wood and parkland of 100 hectares (247 acres), featuring many 'ancient' oak and chestnut trees including the Majesty Oak listed in the Guinness Book of records as the largest maiden Oak tree in the United Kingdom and over 400 years old! A splendid sight to behold.

The splendid Robin's pincushion gall (see picture on the left) is found on wild roses and the fluffy distortion is created by a chemical from a tiny gall wasp where it lays its eggs. When young it is a spectacular mix of light green and crimson.

A mobile phone tool you may find useful is Google Timeline which will map out where you have walked and the distance provided you give it access to your location on your android phone. Go into the google maps app, click on your profile image to see your account details etc and scroll down to your timeline. It even shows you what photos you took at various places which is very handy indeed!

We all hate a clever clogs but google can be very helpful and has also come up with Google Lens to identify objects – flowers, insects, anything. I think it is available to everyone online if you submit an existing photo but for me the regular camera app on my Moto G phone has an extra Google Lens option so when I take a photo it attempts to match it to images online and identify it. As long as you take care to frame the item to be ID'd it more often than not gets it right and leads to say Wiki where you get more information. You could have fun seeing if it ID's regular household objects taken at unusual angles!



Candlesnuff fungus



A curious tree stump



A quirky gate lock

At the moment I am working on combining two of my passions by putting some of my photos to original music which will be found on YouTube - search for Whistling Simon John Dundas. There is one on Nonington. **Happy exploring.**

Simon Dundas

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Eastry WI



Fantastic! Well done the WI.

I hope our attempt to brighten up Eastry for Christmas with the knitted Christmas tree in the Bakery window and the post box topper by the Village Hall worked? It was originally thought about before Tier 3 complicated the making of them so thanks to Gill Bull and Chris Scott for assembling them unaided! Our thoughts are already turning to Easter!

It was not our intention originally to collect donations, but a number of people wanted to give and £21 was collected in the bakery. Members decided that rather than it going into our funds it should be donated to a local charity. They have chosen **The Sunflower Centre for Dementia Day Care** in Sandwich.

Whilst still not able to meet we are staying in touch in many varied ways. Anne Oakley produces a weekly newsletter, I'm admin for our Facebook page and members stay in touch by phone as well.

It has been suggested by a villager that the WI shares some of our recipes for jams and cakes, so I will be asking members to help out with that one too. Although much of what we make comes from recipe books and the WI is not all Jam and Jerusalem, Eastry members do like their cake! I'll start with one of my 'go to' quick and easy ones.

PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

Oven 180C/160 fan, Gas 4. Line 2 baking trays with parchment.

200g Peanut Butter (smooth or crunchy)

175g Golden castor sugar,

Pinch of Salt and 1 large egg



Mix sugar, salt and peanut butter together. Add beaten egg and mix well. With wet hands roll mixture into cherry tomato sized balls and place well spaced on a baking sheet. Then gently flatten with the back of a fork. Bake for 12 minutes - they should be crisper round the edge but pale in the centre. Leave on baking trays for about 10 minutes then transfer to a wire cooling rack.

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Farewell Art E.Choke - you will be missed



After more than 20 years of writing his gardening articles for the Eastry Village News Art.E.Choke (aka Colin Coulson) has finally decided to hang up his trowel and his green wellies. His interesting and informative articles and reminders, presented in a manner that we all could understand with a little extra wit and humour, will be much missed by all our regular readers.

On behalf of all of us associated with the Eastry Village News, past and present, I would like to say a huge THANK YOU to Colin for all his efforts over so many years. He will certainly be a very difficult act to follow.

Having said that if you think you would like to take over or contribute as a part time or an occasional gardening correspondent we would be very pleased to hear from you at evneditor@gmail.com.

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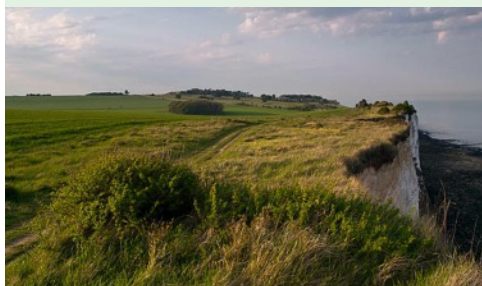
TheWhistlingGardener.co.uk

Managing Nature - Canaries in the mine

As young teachers and parents my wife and I took our pre-school children on several sixth form field courses. I focused upon freshwater biology so our children spent time bent over shallow white dishes 'helping' the students identify and count types of insect, snail, limpet and worm.

Years later my daughter graduated in environmental science. Her first job was with the Environment Agency monitoring the health of streams and rivers in her designated area. I asked her if she would like copies of those fresh water identification keys we used back then? "No Dad, we use electronic monitoring of water conditions now, that's old fashioned." A month or so later....." Dad, could you get me those keys?"

Monitoring devices are expensive, tricky to leave in locations where they can be interfered with so can only be left for limited periods in one place. The animals in a stretch of stream are there all the time, so vulnerable to the effects of pollution, whenever and for however long it occurs so the presence or absence of particular **indicator species** tells us a lot about the health of that stream section.



Langdon Cliffs - Getty Images

A favourite spring/summer walk for many of us is along the cliffs at Langdon, watching the ferries coming in and out, the birds wheeling over cliffs and sea and the many flowers and insects. For years a colony of kittiwakes nested on the cliffs there, beautiful, ocean going gulls clean and white.....and noisy as they mated and reared their chicks.

No longer. For years after we moved to East Kent we would see anglers along the beaches and piers pulling out big cod quite regularly. Today I am told cod are almost totally absent.

The reasons for both changes is the same, the catastrophic decline in sand eels in the seas around here. These small fish form the food for both the gulls, and, particularly for their chicks and for the young cod. The sand eels have declined because the sea has become warmer due to global warming. Both kittiwakes and cod have been driven further north to colder seas. To make matters worse our warmer seas support new, Mediterranean, fish armed with spines which cause them to stick in the crop if fed to young birds, killing them.

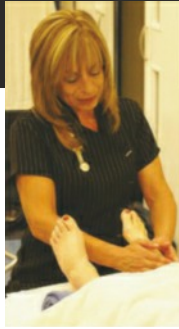
There are dozens of examples like these, where particular species have disappeared, or appeared. With intimate knowledge of their biology we can deduce the message about environmental changes they represent.....but doing anything to change the situation is the **really** tricky bit.

Terry Wood

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Our Honey Bees - Ray Checksfield



As I write this in mid December, I'm wondering where this Christmas will finish up. When you read this we will all know. Have we done the right thing.? I am indeed fortunate that I am allowed to visit my bee hives at least once a week for a quick inspection and maintenance. The hives are well wrapped up and ready for the winter onslaught, if it comes. All my hives are wrapped in 50mm of insulation with just a small entrance and a small grid underneath and an extra top roof tied down.



The weather in November was very warm which meant the queen carried on breeding when she should have been slowing right down. More brood to feed and more consumption of their winter stores. We have had an alert from DEFRA via N.B.U, national bee unit, that there are already losses of hives in the country from starvation. The only way to check is to 'heft' the hive on one side and guess the weight, not very accurate but you get some idea.

Adulteration of and fake honey. This has become a huge international problem in recent years, not helped by the discovery that sugar can now be made from rice. Add that to a small amount of real honey and hey presto. One jar of fake honey. Honey adulteration is the third most adulterated food product in the world after milk and olive oil apparently. **Not a lot of people know that!**

Next time, a lot of us should have had our Covid inoculation and looking forward to a better year. The bees and us enjoying the sun again.

Ray

Eastry Short Mat Bowls Club

Like all indoor social activities, Eastry Short Mat Bowls Club has been put on hold for nearly a year now. However, the club is still around and hopeful that with the roll out of vaccines we may be able to resume play later in the year.

We are always keen to keep in touch with our members to find out if, how and when they want to come back. We have a new website with contact information and forms to receive our news emails and even join the club – www.eastryshortmatbowls.org.uk – please have a look, we look forward to seeing you all as soon as it is safe!

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Bird Watching with Big Nick

Hello everyone, well, what with Christmas, 'lockdown' and the weather, I've hardly been out this period so there hasn't been much to report. I decided to write about a bird family I've not covered before, the wagtails. We only regularly see 3 species in the UK, these are the Pied, the Grey and the Yellow wagtail. They are similar in size to a great tit but with a long tail, which as their names suggests they wag up and down constantly. They are frequently seen on the ground where they busily hunt for insects, but will often take refuge on roof tops.

The most commonly encountered is the Pied Wagtail which can be seen throughout the year. Although not brightly coloured – it is grey, black and white, it is quite an attractive little bird. When not standing and frantically wagging its tail up and down it can be seen dashing about over lawns or car parks in search of food.



Male Pied Wagtail



Male Grey Wagtail

Closely related and more colourful than its name suggests is the Grey Wagtail, these are also resident throughout the year but it is probable that birds will move around if the conditions get too harsh. The male has a grey back and a lemon yellow front, the female is similar but with less yellow. They are frequently found near streams and ditches where they feed at the waters edge, or from branches or stones protruding out of the water. They can sometimes be seen flying up to take an insect out of the air. A great place to see them is along the River Dour at Russell Gardens and Kearsney Abbey, or along the Nailbourne.



Female Yellow Wagtail

The third and in my opinion the most striking is the Yellow Wagtail, this is well described by its name, the male is a bright canary yellow with an olive green back, but the female is noticeably less yellow. This species is a summer visitor to the UK, arriving in early April. Their numbers have declined quite seriously



Male Yellow Wagtail

over the years but it is still quite possible to see them locally. The most reliable place is Elmley on the Isle of Sheppey but I have photographed them near Eastry on occasions and in the spring and autumn they can often be seen passing through Sandwich Bay on their migration.

Let's hope things have improved by the time I write again, take care. *Nick*

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To the Rescue...in the Spirit of Christmas!

For a change Eastry Fish Bar opened on Christmas Eve and owners Christine and Keith Johnson were surprised when local resident, Dave Friend and his daughter Hayley, came in with a load of brown paper bags and ordered 100 portions of chips! He explained that he was a lorry driver and wanted to help all those stranded lorry drivers on the Eastry Bypass. Dave told them he'd like to think people would offer him help if he was stranded abroad.



The Fish Bar was just about to close and this was a big ask but in true British spirit Christine, Keith and their grandson knuckled down and filled over 100 boxes with chips and sausages and pies for Dave and Hayley to take. Dave's family had raised £50 cash towards the cost and he wanted to put the balance on credit card but the Johnsons wouldn't take any money. Dave persisted so they said they all agreed they would donate it to charity, the Fishermen's Mission getting a bonus £50.

Christine said it was nice to be able to do "their bit" to help to lift the spirits of the stranded, cold and hungry drivers who knew they were going to miss their family Christmas. They were all extremely grateful and appreciative. Since then a Fish and Chip Trade magazine has run an article about all this which is on Facebook. **What a wonderful, seasonal act of generosity and kindness. Well Done!**

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E-mail: denis@djonesweb.co.uk



Rose Beer - Back in the day!

Mum had moved the fireguard (which held her big bloomers) to one side and she sat on a low chair in front of the fire, elbows on knees and a toasting fork with a slice of bread on in one hand and a 'roll ye own' cigarette in the other. Suddenly the cigarette became more important than the toasting fork followed by the usual daily dose black smoke issued from the toast followed by a few expletives". She replaced the guard and bloomers in front of the fire (to another whiff of ammonia!) and after a quick scrape of the burnt toast at the back door, fag in mouth, she spread it with margarine.

I think I must have left home before I had black bits on the butter and I'm still unsure if they're from the burnt toast or the cigarette! Coming home from school at lunchtime condensation would be running down every window and wall in the house and a pot would be bubbling away on the stove. After dinner - a poor excuse for a stew - leftovers topped up with lentils - she would lift the monstrosity of a pudding out of the pot and wallop it on the table. It looked like one of Grandads' long-johnned legs on the table. "No currants in it today Mum?" I would ask "just be b****y grateful for what you've got!" Came the reply as she slammed a tin of Golden Syrup or a pot of Jam down beside it. Along with a few prunes and lumpy custard or a rice pudding (that you could eat with knife and fork!) and minus the skin that she had eaten in one go because "that was the best bit!" That was our "afters" or "seconds". Heaven came in disguise for me with the invention of the Arctic Roll but without fridge or freezer that could become a disaster.

Today when you watch any of the many cookery programmes on TV I can't believe the amount of ingredients they use - a pinch of this, a gram of that, garnished with heaven knows what! Our cupboard held a bag of flour, a packet of suet, bread and jam and a bit of sugar. Mother never weighed anything, to own a set of scales would have been 'posh'. If anything was too wet a handful of flour would be thrown in. Now have said and survived all that I am eighty this year so I don't think it has done me any harm! As always Take Care!

Rose Beer

Feeling your age during lockdown? You will get these...!

- 1) To me "drink responsibly" means don't spill it.
- 2) I remember being able to get up without making sound effects.
- 3) The older I get, the earlier it gets late.
- 4) I finally got eight hours sleep. It took three days but whatever!
- 5) I had my patience tested. I'm negative.
- 6) When I say "the other day" I could be referring to anytime between yesterday and 15 years ago.

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