

*St Giles and Shipbourne*  
**NEWSLETTER**



*June 2017*

# OFFICERS OF ST GILES AND VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

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## SHIPBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

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shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com  
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Vice Chair: Nick Tyler 811079  
Councillors: D Pettengell, V Redman  
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VILLAGE WEBSITE [www.shipbourne.com](http://www.shipbourne.com)

## SHIPBOURNE VILLAGE HALL

Chairman: Curtis Galbraith 763637  
Bookings: Helen Leach 07762 241720

## SHIPBOURNE FARMERS' MARKET

Organiser: Bob Taylor 833976

## SHIPBOURNE WI

President: Margaret Thompson 810789

## SHIPBOURNE CRICKET CLUB

Secretary: Mark Fenton 811067

## PLAXTOL & SHIPBOURNE TENNIS CLUB

Membership: Cilla Langdon-Down 810338

## ST GILES' AND SHIPBOURNE NEWSLETTER

Editor: Lindsay Miles 810439  
lindsay\_miles@btinternet.com  
Advertising: Tish Gourmelon 07966 035492  
Copying: Mary Perry 810797

## USEFUL POLICE CONTACT NUMBERS

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## PARISH DIARY – JUNE 2017

Except where indicated below, the main morning service at ST GILES SHIPBOURNE is at 9.30am.

Every weekday at 8.00am Morning Prayer will be said at Plaxtol and every weekday evening (except Friday and Saturday) at 4.30pm Evening Prayer will be said at St Giles Shipbourne.

Plaxtol Church is at present closed for building works. Services are being held in Plaxtol Memorial Hall; Morning Prayer is said in the gazebo in the churchyard.

<b>Thursday</b>	<b>1st</b>	<b>9-11am</b>	<b>Farmers' Market at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>12.30-4pm</b>	<b>Plaxtol Church Fete at The Rectory</b>
<b>SUNDAY PENTECOST (Whit Sunday)</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	8.00am	Holy Communion at Plaxtol Memorial Hall
		<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Parish Communion at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
		11.00am	Family Service followed by short Communion at Plaxtol Memorial Hall
		4.30-7pm	Shoreham Deanery Praise at Lullingstone Castle; activities, picnic, followed by worship at 6.15pm
		Readings:	Numbers 11 vv 24-30 Acts 2 vv 1-21 John 20 vv 19-23
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9-11am</b>	<b>Farmers' Market at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Playchurch at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
<b>SUNDAY (Trinity Sunday)</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
		<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Matins at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
		11.00am	Parish Communion at Plaxtol Memorial Hall
		Readings:	Isaiah 40 vv 12-17, 27-end 2 Corinthians 13 vv 11-end Matthew 28 vv 16-20
<b>Monday</b>	<b>12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Shipbourne Parish Council Meeting, Village Hall</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9-11am</b>	<b>Farmers' Market at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>18<sup>th</sup></b>	8.00am	Holy Communion at Plaxtol Memorial Hall
		<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Parish Communion at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
		12.00pm	Short Communion at Plaxtol Memorial Hall
		4.00pm	Community@4 at Plaxtol Memorial Hall
		Readings:	Genesis 18 vv 1-15 Romans 5 vv 1-8 Matthew 9.35-10.8
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>9-11am</b>	<b>Farmers' Market at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Holy Communion at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
		<b>9.30am</b>	<b>Family Service at St Giles Shipbourne</b>
		11.00am	Parish Communion at Plaxtol Memorial Hall
		Readings:	Genesis 21 vv 8-21 Romans 6 vv 1b-11 Matthew 10 vv 24-39
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9-11am</b>	<b>Farmers' Market at St Giles Shipbourne</b>

# PASTORAL LETTER

## EARLY FRUIT



Part of my introduction to life in rural Kent was a read-through of H. E. Bates' delightful, much-loved and gloriously filmed 'Darling Buds of May'. This little novel speaks of the traditional fruit-picking industry of this county, beginning with the arrival of the first strawberries and the race to get them to market at a premium. One of the larger tasks in moving to the Rectory has been coming to terms with the garden, which was always going to feel overwhelming after the rather meagre patio and shrubbery that we had in Cambridge. I can now see that the first fruit are going to be those hairy British grapes that we call gooseberries; they're already plumping-up a treat!

I also heard of another first-fruit just this afternoon - the first fruit of the 'village telegraph': "The new vicar blessed his pint of beer!" It's true, I did. The same God who brings the spring, and the first gooseberries and strawberries, also brought us barley and hops and water. What refreshment, after ten days of boxes, sticky-tape, electric screwdrivers and the task of unpacking.

In some of the older civilisations of what we now call the Middle East, the harvest of first fruits was an important festival, and in the Jewish calendar this was, and still is, known as Pentecost, falling fifty days after the feast of Passover.

At the birth of Christianity, it was in Jerusalem, at Pentecost, with people from all over the Mediterranean world gathered for this harvest of first fruits, that Jesus' disciples first experienced an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the power of God. So Pentecost, albeit for rather different reasons, has also become an important festival in the Christian calendar; it's Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June this year. The gift of the Holy Spirit is associated with the rite of Baptism, and because Baptism has traditionally been associated with the giving and wearing of white garments, Pentecost has also been known as Whitsun.

So the theme of first fruits gets deeper and deeper. St Paul talks about 'the fruit of the Spirit' being love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22). The idea behind this image is as simple as the things growing in our gardens: if we are fed and watered by the Holy Spirit, we produce these qualities and behavioural characteristic in our lives. And, heaven knows, the world needs these things. What fruit are growing in your garden? Which of spiritual fruits do you see within the various party-political manifestos? How much spiritual fruit is growing in your life? And where and how can we celebrate these things, putting them to work for the Common Good?

**Peter Hayler**

*Rector*

## **CHURCH NOTICES**

### **CHRISTIAN AID WEEK**

Thank you to everyone who supported Christian Aid week in May. We raised well over £500 for the year's campaign to support refugees. For more information on Christian Aid's work, please visit [www.caweek.org](http://www.caweek.org).

Many thanks

**Sally Bryden**

*Editor's Note: Thanks for all your hard work Sally!*

## **PLAYCHURCH**

Playchurch is for pre-schoolers, primary school children and parents and takes place on the second Saturday of every month from 9.30-10.30am at St Giles Shipbourne.

Come along to hear fuzzy-felt bible stories, singing and craft activities.

Next meeting: Saturday 10 June 2017

For further information please contact:

Mary Perry Tel: 01732 810797

# **SAVE THE DATE**

**St Giles' Summer Fete  
Bank Holiday Monday  
28 August 2017**

**12.30pm – 3.30pm**

**On Shipbourne Common  
(by kind permission of Fairlawne Estate)**



**We really need help this year to organise the day and run stalls – please contact Lindsay or Viv to volunteer (01732 810439 or 01732 810035)**



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References and photo gallery available at

<http://www.checkatrade.com/InscopeManagement Services/>

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**BULK REFUSE SERVICE (4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of month)**

Upper Green Road (opposite Village Hall) 8am - 9am on

**Saturday 27 May 2017**

**Saturday 24 June 2017**

**Saturday 22 July 2017**

## **SCOTTISH DANCING IN SHIPBOURNE VILLAGE HALL**

Held fortnightly on Tuesday evenings from 7.15-9.00pm, dates for June are 13th and 27th. All are welcome - just turn up on the night and give it a try or phone Helen Leach (811144) or Margaret Thompson (810789) for more information

***Helen Leach***

**01732 811144**

## **All Saints Community Project Trust Chatham**

Plaxtol and Shipbourne churches look to support All Saints Trust by providing financial support, donations of food, household goods and toys, and by offering voluntary support.

**If you have any unwanted food, household goods (eg furniture, soft furnishings) or toys that you are willing to give away, please let me know by email or by phone –**

**leach\_helen@yahoo.co.uk**

**07762 241720**

**01732 811144**

Any such items will be advertised, and if required, then collected and distributed by Chatham.

Just 30 minutes drive away, it is one of the poorest wards in the country and any help you are able to offer will be very gratefully received. Thank you.



**Shipbourne Village Hall**  
**Registered Charity No 1074519**

The Hall can be hired for £12.50 per hour with a minimum of 4 hours (£50.00). It has an attractive secure garden with a good gate that can be closed. Inside there is wheelchair access through the rear door, a well-appointed kitchen, the main hall and an adjoining side room plus all usual facilities.

For Village Hall **enquiries and bookings** please call 07762 241720 or email [shipbourne.villagehall@gmail.com](mailto:shipbourne.villagehall@gmail.com)

Further details can be found on the Shipbourne website  
[www.shipbourne.com](http://www.shipbourne.com)



## **The Kentish Rifleman**

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**Bookings always advisable on 01732 810727**

## **SHIPBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL**

The contact details for the Parish Council are:

Shipbourne Parish Council  
Clerk – Mrs Sarah Huseyin  
Gable Cottage  
Ismays Road  
Ightham TN15 9BE  
e-mail: [shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com)  
Telephone: 01732 886402

Please visit the website for Shipbourne Parish Council Meeting Agenda's, Minutes and News. (<http://www.shipbourne.com/>) If you have any ideas or would like something added, such as a news item, please email [web@shipbourne.com](mailto:web@shipbourne.com).

### **Vacancy**

The Parish Council are still looking for a Parish Councillor, if you are interested in applying, please contact the Parish Clerk – [shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com) or telephone 01732 886402.

### **Litter**

We have noticed a recent increase in the amount of litter in our village Please look out for litter and litter pick when you are out walking. Tonbridge and Malling have just advertised a 'litter app'. Littergram is a free app solution that allows users to take a picture of litter, flytipping or overflowing litter bins that need emptying. GPS then pinpoints the location of the problem and the photo is sent automatically to the relevant local council authority.

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council worked with littergram to develop the app, which will help the Council to respond even more quickly when rubbish is spotted and reported by app users. As well as pinpointing the exact location of the rubbish and sending a photo, the app also gives the Council the opportunity to reply to the sender to let them know what action is being taken. For more information visit [www.littergram.co.uk](http://www.littergram.co.uk)



## **Highways Matters**

If you notice any potholes, broken or missing signs or blocked gullies, please report them to the Parish Clerk so that she can notify Kent Highways.

## **Are you part of a walking or rambling group?**

The Parish Council have received a flyer from Label 1 TV who are looking for groups of walkers to take part in a potential television series. If you and your group think this could be you then please contact [walking@label1.tv](mailto:walking@label1.tv)

## **Dog Training on the Common**

We have received a number of reports of a number of dog trainers using the common, whilst everyone is free to use the common it should not be used to the exclusion of others. Dogs must also be under the control of their owners at all times.

## **Saturday Waste Service**

The next dates for the bulk refuse freighter are: 27th May, 24 June and 22 July 2017. The freighter visits Upper Green Road between 8-9am. The service is provided for disposal of general household waste only. Commercial or trade waste will not be accepted. The following items cannot be collected: builders' waste, concrete and similar waste, vehicle parts, oil, paint or other chemicals, asbestos, plasterboard, soil, rubble or bricks, glazed windows or toughened glass, water tanks, boilers, iron/steel baths. Large items such as bed bases and wardrobes should be broken down in advance. Please stay with your items until they are on the freighter otherwise they will not be collected. Should you have any queries please contact 01732 876147 or visit

<http://www.tmbc.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/recycling,-rubbish-and-waste/household-waste-special-collections-for-large-items/saturday-household-waste-service>

## **Defibrillator**

A new defibrillator has recently been installed on the back wall of the Chaser and we are looking for more Volunteers who would be willing to be part of a Village Emergency Telephone System (VETS). It is a Community Scheme to summon assistance in the case of an emergency and ONLY after 999 has been called. VETS does not replace 999. Volunteers can collect and bring the defibrillator to the patient and assist in CPR whilst the ambulance is on its way. If you are interested in participating please email the Parish Clerk [shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com). The defibrillator is registered

with the Ambulance Service, if anyone requires the defibrillator the code for the cabinet will be given over the phone on calling 999. The Chaser has the code for the cabinet. Please notify the Parish Clerk if you notice any problems with the defibrillator or cabinet. We will be organising a training session in the autumn, please look on the website and at the newsletter for the date.

### **Kent Police**

To report a non-urgent crime, call 101. Kent Police will be launching a new online reporting service later this year. Look out for details in forthcoming newsletters or on the Shipbourne Parish website.

The below advice has been given following recent thefts from motor vehicles including one in Upper Green Road, Shipbourne.

### **Security advice**

- . Don't leave anything on display
- . Take valuables like laptops and satnavs with you
- . Wipe satnav suction marks away from your windscreen or dashboard
- . Remove the stereo if you can
- . Never leave your keys in the ignition
- . A Thatcham-approved immobiliser or steering lock can help secure older vehicles
- . Park in a garage, secure car park or well-lit area if possible
- . Make sure you don't leave your car keys visible from the outside of your home

### **Planning**

#### **Planning applications:**

*TM/17/00676/FL* - Demolition of the existing granary and construction of a replacement dwelling alongside repair works and reinstatement to the Oast roundel. Martins Oast, Back Lane, Shipbourne, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 9PP.

You can view and comment on planning applications and decisions at [www.tmbc.gov.uk](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk)

Our next Parish Council meeting is at 7.30pm on 12 June 2017. All members of public are welcome to attend.

### **Mrs Sarah Huseyin**

Parish Clerk

e-mail: [shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:shipbourneparishcouncil@gmail.com)

Telephone: 01732 886402

## **Macbeth'** at White Rock Inn from 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017

The *Sevenoaks Shakespeare Society* is returning to the **White Rock Inn** this summer for an Open Air production of *Macbeth*, directed by Sandra Barfield.

Performances: Thurs–Sat **29<sup>th</sup> June–1<sup>st</sup> July 8pm**

Wed–Sat **5–8<sup>th</sup> July 8pm;**

Sun 9<sup>th</sup> **July** matinee at **3.30pm.**

Do come – PLEASE bring warm clothing for an open-air production AND rugs/low-back chairs to sit on.

Food & drink available at the Inn – sorry, but no picnics - please!

Tickets £12 *in advance*; £15 *on the door* (cash/cheque); children & students £5.

Tickets from White Rock Inn (01732 833112)

or Stag Sevenoaks ([www.stagevenoaks.co.uk](http://www.stagevenoaks.co.uk); 01732 450175).

For more information or if you would like to volunteer to help as a steward, please contact Brenda Mullinger (01732 810688).



### **SOUTH EAST OPEN STUDIOS**

South East Open studios (SEOS) takes place **9<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> June**. 26 artists in Tonbridge will open their studio doors to members of the public. Printed guides available at local venues and from the website.

[www.seos-art.org](http://www.seos-art.org)

## SHIPBOURNE WI

This month our speaker Dale Thomas gave us a "dazzling" talk on some of her favourite pieces of jewellery in the V&A collection, illustrated by beautiful photographs. The jewels themselves were beautiful and displayed the fashions of the day as well as the power and wealth of the owners, but equally astounding was the workmanship involved and the history of the pieces as they came down through time to us. The modern creations shown were less concerned with the conventional idea of precious metal and stones, and more with the actual design, creativity and the use of more everyday materials, challenging our traditional idea of jewellery.

This was also our Annual General Meeting when the Committee and Officers are appointed and the Resolutions are discussed and voted upon. The results of these votes are then sent, via our delegate, to the National AGM so that each WI has a say.

The Committee meeting will be held on 7th June at Popes Villa Farm, and the monthly meeting on 14th June will be our Birthday Party so there will not be a speaker this month.

***Sue Streeter***



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## **SHIPBOURNE FARMERS' MARKET**

To make shopping at the Farmers Market more interesting we are going to add guest stalls. We already have additional craft producers on the first Thursday of the month and as some of our stallholders now come every other week we will invite others on an occasional basis. Now that we have our licence we shall also be featuring local wines, beers, gin, ciders etc. (We shall add this information to our 'new' web site [www.shipbournefm.co.uk](http://www.shipbournefm.co.uk) ).

We would also like to remind you Lionel (our barista) and Sue serve a very good coffee inside the Church. It is surprising that some visitors don't get as far as the Church where we have even more stalls. Have a coffee and a browse, you will be surprised at the variety of produce on offer.

Knight Frank, Estate Agents, have kindly become our 'supporter'. Thanks to their generosity we have new banners and our shopping bags. We are giving the bags away from our Co-operative stall (if you would like to make a donation it would be gratefully received !). Hopefully we shall have some left by the time you read this. At the first market we gave them out 100 flew off the stand !! (our allocation was 250).

Although the first quarter started off well regarding the number of visitors April and early May have been poor due to the vagaries of the weather. This time it was not rain, just cold, cloudy and thoroughly miserable weather. Hopefully by the time you read summer (plus some rain) has arrived.

We are in need of a Treasurer to replace David, who has decided to step down after acting as Treasurer since the market first started and our thanks go to him for all his help over the years. If you can spare a few hours every week please we would be very grateful please contact Bob on 01732 833976.

At the summer solstice on June 21st, the sun rises at 4am and sets at 10pm as we mark the middle of summer. Long days mean growers and producers are at full stretch, and, given rain, the fruits of their labours should now be in glorious evidence at the market. Spring lamb, asparagus, broad beans, new potatoes, strawberries and cherries – all the ingredients of a perfect midsummer celebration and at their very best this month so head off into the countryside on a quest for the best.

There are also early cucumbers, peas, French beans, spinach and courgettes, alongside all kinds of salad leaves now in season.

The long days and the warmth also herald the start of the great English soft fruit season with strawberries in abundance – one of the great advantages of local markets is the chance to try some of the finer flavoured varieties rather than the more robust berries grown to withstand the rigours of the supermarket supply chain that may not have the same flavour.

Local eggs are also full of flavour now as chickens enjoy the lush summer grass. A short supply chain means market eggs are fresh. Try a frittata, a summer favourite – especially this broad bean and pea version.

## **COOKERY CORNER**

### **BROAD BEAN AND PEA FRITTATA**

**Serves 4/Prepare 15 minutes/Cook 25 minutes**

- 3 tbsp olive oil
  - 3 – 4 spring onions, thinly sliced
  - 6 – 8 cooked new potatoes, sliced
  - 100g each podded fresh peas and broad beans
  - 6 free-range eggs
  - 50g hard local goat's cheese, cubed
  - 3 tbsp chopped fresh chives
  - salt and freshly ground black pepper
1. Preheat the grill. Heat half the oil in a large frying pan and add the onions, potatoes and seasoning. Cook over a medium heat for 5 minutes, turning, until golden brown. Blanch the peas and broad beans in boiling water for 2 minutes then drain. Add to the onions and cook for a couple of minutes. Stir in the goat's cheese and chives.
  2. Beat the eggs with the seasoning and add what is in the pan. Heat the remaining oil in a frying pan until smoking and pour in the egg mixture. Cook over a medium heat for 4 - 5 minutes until the egg is set and the base is golden. Put the pan under the grill to cook the top. Turn onto a plate and serve warm or at room temperature.

## **SHIPBOURNE SCHOOL NEWS**

There has been much to look forward to this term: a visit to Home Farm to watch the lambing for the younger children – and a trip into Tonbridge on the bus for those in Year 6 in readiness for their transition to secondary school. Fairlawne class have had several activities relating to studying the Tudors, including a visit to Hall Place, and there was a chance for Years 3 and 4 to compete at the Tonbridge School Athletics day. On 17th May the school hosted the annual Tonbridge Village Collaboration netball tournament. All participants enjoyed an excellent competition, with Shipbourne reaching the final after a nail-biting semi-final against Hildenborough. The team played their socks off in the final, and won by an impressive 6-1 against Stocks Green. We were really proud of our team, not only for the fantastic netball they played, but also the super team spirit. Year 3 and 4 also attended the 'Living Land' show at the Kent Showground in Detling. Year 6 have participated an informative morning at Salomons, Tunbridge Wells, on keeping safe in a range of situations, organised by Salus. Finally, all classes will be participating in a visit to Port Lympe towards the end of June.

Shipbourne School pupils are indeed well provided for: all these educational opportunities come on top of regular after-school clubs such as Outdoor Art, Computer Club, Creative Writing and Fit for Life, which are well supported. School resumes on June 6<sup>th</sup> after the half-term break.

***Brenda Mullinger***

## **THE WEATHER IN APRIL**

The rainfall recorded in April was 8 mm. (0.3 in.) compared with an average of 53.7 mm. (2.3 in.) over the last thirty two years. The average maximum temperature was 16.8<sup>o</sup> C, compared with an average of 14.1<sup>o</sup>C over the last twenty six years and the average minimum temperature was 0.1<sup>o</sup>C compared with an average of 4.2<sup>o</sup>C over the last twelve years.

***Donald Forbes***

## **JULY NEWSLETTER**

Please send any articles and adverts for the June newsletter by **17 June 2017**. Please note any articles received after this date will be held over to the next issue as the Newsletter has a tight deadline for printing. Please email articles to [lindsay\\_miles@btinternet.com](mailto:lindsay_miles@btinternet.com) or call 01732 810439.

## **Mote Farm Open Farm Sunday**

Mote Farm Open Farm Sunday will be taking place on 11th June at Mote Farm, Ivy Hatch, Sevenoaks, TN15 0NT from 10am until 4pm.

Tractor & trailer rides, working machinery displays and static displays.

RSPB bird walks.

Farm trail and children's activities.

BBQ and tea & cakes.

Produce stalls.

**£1.00 entry fee for over 12's will be donated to Marie Curie.**

Dogs on leads only permitted in farm yard due to livestock.



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(10/16)

## **THE GARDEN SHED**

Having experienced one of the driest springs for many years many plants are showing signs of stress (this article is being written in the middle of May, so by the time you read this the situation could be very different!). We have just had a reasonable shower of rain and although the ground looks wet it is extremely dry underneath, and it will need many showers for the water to penetrate to any depth. This point is important, as the time for planting all the tender plants is here, both for the flowers and the vegetables, and sowing any of the seeds of the less hardy plants. When preparing the holes make them slightly larger than required and fill them up with water, then allow the water to drain into the soil. After planting give all the plants a thorough watering to settle the soil round the roots. In the case of sowing the seeds, draw out the drill and give that a thorough watering, sow the seeds onto the moistened soil, re-cover the seeds and firm the soil over them. Last year I covered the soil round the runner bean trench with a mulch of chipped bark and an area 15ms (18ins.) either side. It made a great difference to the need for watering and held back the growth of weeds.

The sharp frost that we had towards the end of April sadly damaged the later Magnolias and Wisterias and it also spoilt quite a lot of the soft young foliage on many plants. New foliage will grow, but the damage to potatoes may reduce the size of the crop.

Some of the late flowering herbaceous plants like the sedums, michaelmas daisies and border chrysanthemums tend to grow fairly tall and by the time of flowering have flopped apart (unless they had been staked in early June) this really spoils their autumn display. The 'Chelsea Chop' (because it is carried out just after the Chelsea Flower Show) will prevent this happening. The growth of the plants is reduced by a third which will make them grow bushier and, although the flower heads will not be as big, there will be many more of them.

Plants that will add stateliness to any border are the lilies. Many of them can be purchased as pot plants and are quite happy to continue growing and flowering in containers, but they will do much better if they are planted into the ground. Lilies like to have their heads in the sun but they do appreciate their roots in the shade; they also enjoy a soil boosted with compost or leaf mould. Given these conditions, they will reward you with excellent displays year after year. If the lilies are left in their containers until they have finished flowering, they can be planted into the border afterwards;

they will carry on growing there quite happily given the conditions mentioned above. However, if the bulbs are left in the pots until the foliage dies in the autumn they can then be planted into the ground. The bulbs do need to be planted fairly deep, 16-18cms (6-8ins) below the surface.

Until next time.

**Tessa Forbes**



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## **LOCAL HISTORY**

### **GROUP CAPTAIN P.G.HILL, 1922 - 2017**

Individuals and their families are just as much part of local history as landscape and buildings. But, sadly, it is often not until we hear someone's obituary that we learn what an interesting life they had. Shame, we say, had we known, we would have had so much to talk of.

Peter Hill was such a man: charming and modest, he lived in Shipbourne for over forty years and although many of us knew him as a friend who was always interested in everything from politics to sport we never knew the full extent of his long and varied career. Peter attended Tonbridge school, leaving in 1940 at the age of eighteen to train in the RAF. Fortunately, the young pilot saw little actual enemy action in the war.

He commenced flying training on Tiger Moths, moving onto Hawker Harts, Miles Master then flying solo on Hurricanes in March 1941. He writes: "On 2 July 1941 posted to 456 Royal Australian Air Force Squadron at Valley (Anglesey) flying Defiants and earmarked night fighter defence of north west, however very little enemy activity. Just as well, as looking for another aircraft on a dark night without aids was a needle in haystack affair; however, frequent night stand-bys or readiness (airborne within 15 minutes).

Last Defiant flight was on 7 October prior to conversion onto Beaufighters. Attached to Blackpool for twin engine conversion on Blenheim and Blackburn Botha (not a very nice aircraft). However, gained some experience on twins prior to returning to Valley for first flight in a Beau [sic]. In spite of their reputation to swing on take-off and landing, found the Beau a fairly docile machine. Next few months spent developing night interception techniques. Squadron had one or two aircraft on stand-by every night."

Peter was attached to the Blind Landing School for a short course in May 1942 then returned to Valley where the Squadron was re-equipped with the Mk VI, "a more powerful beast". A short instructor's course was followed by "more day and night practice including patrols off southern Irish coast as Germans were carrying out anti-shiping patrols. One of the boys had the good luck to intercept a JU88 which he shot down. Early in 1945 the Squadron commenced to re-equip with Mosquitos, a beautiful aircraft. Unfortunately, my time with the Squadron came to an end in March 1943 when I was posted to the Far East."

He flew a new Beaufighter Mk VI to Gibraltar, rerouting to avoid the French coast. Next day he set off eastwards to Algiers - to avoid the fighting in North Africa - then on to Tripoli, Cairo, Palestine, Baghdad, Bahrein, Sharjah, Karachi, Jodhpur and finally Calcutta, the home of 176 Squadron. All this aged 21 years. In 1944 he was promoted to Wing Commander and became Squadron CO. Young men in time of war had responsibilities we - often mistakenly - would be loath to give a 22 year old today.

The flying adventures Peter had in the Far East and India make fascinating reading but with the RAF winding down there he was sad to be posted back to the UK in 1946. A fully qualified flying instructor he was in command of one of two squadrons flying Mosquitos, often night flying work during the time of the Korean war. He later flew the Miles Marathon, Vampire, Meteor, and "frequently flew the Canberra which was a delightful aircraft and easy to fly," and was finally thrilled to fly the Valiant jet aircraft. In 1960 he was selected to command a Valiant Squadron in Norfolk. One of his training flights included flying a Vulcan jet nonstop from the UK to Australia. After 2½ years in command he received the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air.

Peter had other postings abroad and command of the Station at Northolt, but it was his desk jobs in the air force running catering and messes that gave him the experience that qualified him for involvement in another love of his life, tennis. Before retiring he had run RAF Tennis which entitled him to a seat on the Council of the Lawn Tennis Association. As their representative he travelled to tournaments throughout the country finally becoming their Honorary Life Vice President.

Peter retired from the RAF in 1977 and finally moved into the comfortable cottage he had purchased in Shipbourne in 1975. The Orchard had been built by Mrs Barker - a lady who hatched her goose eggs under her bed - who had farmed at Hookwood with her late husband for very many years. In 1986 he became President of Kent County Tennis and was for some time a Governor of New Beacon School. On a Saturday he enjoyed a drink with friends at the Kentish Rifleman and continued to attend events at Wimbledon until his final years. A long life, well lived.

***Libby Cohen***

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**Tish Gourmelon**

**Tel: 07966 035492 / Email: tishgo@hotmail.com**

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