



VILLAGE

NEWSLETTER

### **OUR NATURAL NEIGHBOURS**

Many years ago I read the Duncton wood series of books and loved them, when I see mole hills on the lawn I tend to imagine a whole world of intrigue and drama going on below my feet, the fight between good and evil! Although I haven't seen many mole hills in Pyecombe I do see them every day up the road at work so I figured it was a close enough natural neighbour to write about and find out what really goes on under those mole hills.....

Moles are not very often seen as they live most of their life underground in pastures, woodlands and gardens. We only know they are there by the molehills they leave behind as they are tunnelling. In medieval times they were called moldewarp (earth thrower) what a great name! Each mole has its own network of firm-walled tunnels which are around 5 cms wide by 4cms high and up to 70 metres long. They can be just below the surface or as deep as 70 cm.

Moles territories may overlap but they will avoid each other except during the mating season if two males meet then they can fight to the death. After mating the female builds a special nest chamber about the size of a football and lines it with dry grasses and leaves, this chamber will have a larger than normal molehill above it and be close to a food source.

So what do they look like? Well they have solid muscular bodies covered in black fur occasionally you may get grey, cream, white and piebald colours but mostly they are black. They have long pointed noses and short upright tails. Tiny pin-head sized eyes and large shovel like feet with five strong claws used for digging. The male's body is about 6 inches long and the female is slightly smaller. They are one of Britain best known mammals and closely related to the hedgehogs and shrews. Their life span is around 3 years. They feed mainly on earthworms but also insect larvae and slugs. Moles main activity is to find food if they do not eat every few hours they will die of starvation. They find food by running along their tunnels eating up the worms and insects that fall from the tunnel walls consuming up to half their body weight in food in a day. When food is plentiful they will make a food store by biting the heads off and leaving them for later!!

Moles do not have good sense of smell sight or hearing but have very good sense of touch and can pick up vibrations in the soil around them; sensitive whiskers and thousands of tiny hairs on their noses help them find food and water. Moles are very rarely above ground except to find nesting material and new territory which they will do at night to avoid predators like Tawny and Barn owls, they don't taste very nice to other predators!!

So much to learn about this amazing creature we share our world with.....

Kerry😊

## **Rectory Ramblings - Magic Moments**

Retirement is one of those 'new beginnings' that we have been thinking about and celebrating over the past year. No doubt it will in time feel that way, but just at the moment our plans are very unsettled and all that we hoped to do has been thwarted one way or another. Well, it happens – not all journeys or new beginnings are smooth ones.

These setbacks have set me thinking about the limits of planning – and even of images of life as a journey full of purpose and direction, and the prospect of some sad farewells coming up over the next few weeks have made me ask myself what it is that I shall most remember from the past 8 years here.

There are of course, certain achievements – all the result of teamwork. The building of the Pyecombe extension is one of them. But more importantly, there are loads of magic moments: times shared with people at different events. Some happy, some sad, some simply moments of laughter or connection when we have been doing something else entirely.

Thinking about those magic moments, I am reminded of a poem that I used to have on my wall at work. It is called **Instantes**, by Jorge Luis Borges, and contains these lines:

*I was one of those people who lived each minute of his life  
sensibly, and fully;  
Of course I had moments of happiness.  
But if I could go back, I would try to have only good moments.  
Because if you don't know, life is made up only of those, only of  
moments;  
Don't lose this one now.  
I was one of those who never go anywhere without a  
thermometer,  
a hot-water bottle, an umbrella and a parachute;  
if I could live again, I would travel more lightly.*

Well, I am not going to give up my hot-water bottle, but I do hope to travel more lightly in retirement. I am not sure we can choose to have only moments (after all, we do have to make some plans and get some things done), or that all the moments we have will be good ones, but I do think that we can overdo ideas of direction and purpose, and forget that the journey of life is a context and within it we need to be alive to the unexpected.

At times of decline and confusion, when someone seems to have turned all the signposts around or taken them down altogether, we can still enjoy the moment. Victorian Christians, with their conviction that 'God is working his purpose out', tended rather to over emphasise the importance of order and progress, yet Jesus told his followers that to understand his message we had to be like little children. And one thing that little children are really good at is enjoying the moment.

So as I write this final episode of Rectory Ramblings – from my pen at least – I want to thank you for the precious moments we have shared over the past 8 years. Pyecombe is a lovely community, and memories of our time here will always be very special for me.

Caroline

### **Pew Platter**

How busy the Church has been since the last newsletter.

There have been four baptisms, and it is so good to see the 'Young Pyecombers' being brought to the Church, and we look forward to watching them grow. Also, there have been three weddings, how lovely it is for all the people who fill the Church to watch the couples take their vows.

This year we also held a Renewal of Wedding Vows Service. It didn't matter how many year's, it could have been one year or fifty years, or more! And it was great to welcome 15 couples plus families to this very special service.

There has also been one funeral, when villagers joined the Blackford family, at the service for Peter. Both Peter and Bo took great interest, and also gave a lot of their time working for the village, and they will be greatly missed by all who knew them.

We have also had a great Village Weekend, and again the comments on the flower displays in the Church say how good they were. And there are many people who look out for the road signs about June/July, as they so enjoy visiting us each year.

Since then we have also had three Tea, Cake and Chat afternoons – Hope you managed to come along to one of these. So many THANKS are due to ALL who put in the time and hard work that gives the village the various events through the year. MORE TO COME! Help at any event always welcome.

As well as our usual Services, 6pm 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday and 10am 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday each month, we will have:-

***HARVEST Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October at 6pm. Please bring donations to Church on 7<sup>th</sup> October.***

***REMEMBRANCE Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November 6pm, when we think of the villagers who gave their lives in two World Wars.***

***CAROL SERVICE Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December 6pm, with Mid Sussex Brass Band, and the Village Choir.***

As most of you will know, Caroline our Priest-in-Charge and her husband Alan are retiring. There is so much we could say about the care, support and leadership they have given us through the years that we can only give our Love and Thanks, and Best Wishes to them both.

Best Wishes to you all The Church Team

## **A peaceful oasis in a hectic world**

Our village Church is open every day between 10am and 6pm in the summer (10am to 4pm in the winter).

We are pleased to offer a warm welcome to many, many visitors who are walking the South Downs Way - people seem to be grateful for a drink and a loo, and they also appreciate the peace and quiet offered by the building.

A postcard addressed to The Shepherds Church, Church Hill, Pyecombe was recently received from a couple from Newcastle who had walked the South Downs Way saying “This is just a line of thanks for the generous and moving hospitality shown to us as we passed through last week”

What a lovely surprise this card was!

## **Parish Council Jottings**

We often receive comments on the large amount of litter building up in the parish and having taken this on board Council arranged a parish litter picking event on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2017. Sadly the event was not well attended with only one parishioner joining members of the council to take on board the task. There will be future events in the parish please do take the time to support these if you can.

The Play Area Project continues with the recent submission of a grant request to West Sussex County Council supported by our County Councillor Joy Dennis. If this grant application proves successful we will then revisit Mid Sussex District Council with our plans and hope to see the project come to fruition in the not too distant future!

Council are also waiting to hear whether their recent Traffic Order Regulation request has been successful. This item will be discussed by West Sussex County Council in November and we hope will go some way to alleviating some of the parking and littering issues in this area.

We hope you have found your way around the new Village and Parish Council website at [www.pyecombevillage.co.uk](http://www.pyecombevillage.co.uk) please do sign up for weekly updates and remember to let us know of any items you would like to see included.

Recent Planning applications for our Parish include:

***SDNP/17/04221/ADV*** BP Garage, London Road, Pyecombe. Installation of 1 no. M & S Fascia Signage BP-UK-520, 2 no. M & S Box Signs BP-UK-500, 1 no. WBC Sign BP-UK-412, 1 no. BP Shop Helios Sign BGB-SN-101.

***SDNP/17/03469/FUL*** 1 and 2 Pyecombe Street, Pyecombe. Erection of single-storey garages to two houses.

***SDNP/17/04000/HOUS*** Hobbs Cottage, Haresdean Lane, Pyecombe. Demolish Existing Garden Room; erect Garden Room with further storage (as applications SDNP/17/02286/FUL and SDNP/17/02287/LIS) and convert existing garage to provide further accommodation for the main house.

***SDNP/17/04001/LIS*** Hobbs Cottage, Haresdean Lane, Pyecombe. Demolish Existing Garden Room; erect Garden Room with further storage (as applications SDNP/17/02286/FUL and SDNP/17/02287/LIS) and convert existing garage to provide further accommodation for the main house

It is always nice to see residents at the Parish Council meetings, but if this is not possible and you would like to keep up to date with Parish Matters all Agendas and Minutes can be found on the Website.

*Dawn Langston – Clerk and RFO*

## **Parish Council Meeting ~ Dates for 2017**

7th November

### **Parish Clerk & RFO**

Dawn Langston – [parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk](mailto:parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk)

Telephone contact – 07909 332605

## **PYECOMBE CHURCH 100 CLUB**

The draw results for the last three months are as follows:

MONTH	£10	£20	£100
JUNE	BRIDGET HARWOOD	MIEKE THOMAS	
JULY	JANE CAPLIN	PAMELA WRIGHT	IAN CURRIE
AUGUST	PETER REEVES	JANE CAPLIN	

### ***Pyecombe Village Weekend 1st – 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017***

Pyecombe Village celebrated its annual weekend and flower festival on the first two days in July. This was our thirtieth year and we were lucky to have two beautiful sunny days.

The theme for this year's floral displays was "New Beginnings" and Pyecombe Church – the Church of the Transfiguration (there are only two of them in the country, the other one being in Truro) – was itself transfigured with another stunning exhibition. It was an interesting choice of theme and called for much creativity but as usual the villagers rose to the occasion.

There were displays celebrating Creation, new births, new hobbies and interests, new stages of life and many more. You didn't want to miss them!

The Weekend was opened by the Pyecombe Village Choir -now in its third year – singing a joyful and wide range of material. And while the tea and cakes stall was getting busy, the Hassocks recorders set up in the church to play their brand of gentle music.

This year, for the first time, we booked the Lewes, Glynde and Beddingham brass band to play and they entertained us with a tremendous variety of popular tunes while people sat around and enjoyed an excellent ploughman's lunch and a drink from our well-stocked bar, served from the village marquee. We hope we can have them back next year.

On Saturday afternoon, for the second year running, we staged the bizarre Fancy Dress Dog show. This has to be seen, and one would have no quarrel with this year's winner, a truly impressive canine Superman!

There were a number of smaller tents and gazebos set up around the church yard; one housed the Good as New sale – always a winner – and another, paintings by the Thomas More Art Group. The popular Pick a Bottle stall enjoyed its third year and of course, no village fete would be complete without a raffle. This gives me a good opportunity to thank our sponsors and kind people who donated prizes.

The Weekend finished, as it always does, with a Songs of Praise led by our vicar, the Revd Caroline Curren in the flower-bedecked church. Sadly, we will shortly have to say goodbye to her as she herself embarks on a New Beginning, her well-deserved retirement.

The Weekend raised a total of £2408, of which £1918 went to the church and £490 to support the work of our social committee.

Tim Cullen  
Chairman, Village Weekend Committee

***We thank Marie Bartholomew for the first part of a series of articles on her time at Pyecombe Primary School, being the last Head teacher at the Village School before it finally closed in 1965, when the building became a residential property that has since been known as Old School Cottage.***

### **Memories of Pyecombe School**

I was thrilled to be appointed Head Teacher of Pyecombe Primary School in September 1961 at the age of 30. I had been educated at an even smaller Victorian School in the village of Rodmell and loved the countryside and rural life.

After qualifying I spent three years teaching 42 seven to nine year olds in a rather remote village in Kent, followed by 6 years in a large primary school in Bexley Heath. I thoroughly enjoyed both schools, but starting at Pyecombe felt like coming home.

The school building consisted of one very small room, heated by an open fire, for the infants and a slightly larger room with a tall coke fuelled stove. Each room lead out to their own cloakroom with a washbasin at one end. There was a tiny room at the end of the infant cloakroom where the school dinners were served out and the washing up done. A sloping path led down to the playground where the toilets were situated. This was sheltered and had lovely views over to the golf course and the downs.

The number of children varied from year to year but usually was between 32 and 38. They all walked to school from all parts of Pyecombe, from Newtimber, and one boy came from a farm on the downs beyond Jack and Jill Windmills.

I taught all the Juniors, usually around 20, and an infant teacher taught the younger ones. As a small school we were allowed a clerical assistant for half hour a day, but still had the same administration work as larger schools who had full time secretaries, we just had smaller figures to put on the forms. I was very fortunate to have Pat Wilson in that post and she often stayed on a bit longer, if needed, to finish an urgent letter which had to be written by hand as we had no typewriter. Most of the admin work I took home to complete when I had finished preparing my lessons.

The dinners arrived by taxi from Poynings School, and Mrs Berry came in each day to serve them out and wash up. Mrs Adsett was the caretaker and came in before school started, to unlock the building and deal with the heating. She returned after school to clean the building.

During school hours I had to answer the phone, attend to visitors and deliveries, cope with any mishaps, and remember to stoke the heater in my room, or face a scolding from Mrs Adsett.

Both Pat Wilson and Mrs Berry were very kind if the infant teacher was absent and I had to teach both classes.

Each would stay on for a while with the infant class while I set my class down to work before I took the infants. Support also came from Geoff Lee, our village policeman, who came on his day off to take the boys for football in the Wyshe field.

## **Marie Bartholomew**

### ***Recipes Required!***

Regular readers will almost certainly be missing those tasty recipes from Lalage. In view of this we are looking for people to contribute their favourite recipes either on a regular basis or even just a one off article.

If you have anything that you cook on a regular basis or just a family favourite please email to [parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk](mailto:parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk)

The next newsletter is due out in December. We would love to receive articles from you to share with your community. These can be news, items of interest, local history, jokes, recipes anything that would have been passed around the campfire to keep the sense of community strong in days gone by.

We are thinking of including photos of local events in both future editions of the newsletter and also on our village website. If you would like something included please send to the Clerk at the email address below.

To be included in the December issue please send articles in anytime from now until November 15th. You can email them to [parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk](mailto:parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk) or post a written piece in the letter box at no. 14 The Wyshe marked newsletter.

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Ed. *Dawn Langston*