

No. 158 March 2020

VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

Rector's ramblings. *Reaching out to our village in these troubled times*

It is always good to look out for one another but particularly so when some of us may be feeling particularly vulnerable. So, if you are isolated and alone and need some support with shopping or posting a letter, or urgent supplies, or would just appreciate a friendly chat on the phone, please get in touch.

I can be contacted on 01273 857456 or tevtimharford@gmail.com. Dawn Langston, Clerk to the Parish Council can be contacted on 07909 332605 or parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk.

Similarly, if you are in a position to offer help and support to one of our neighbours please let us know how to get in touch with you, what help you may be able to offer, and when you are available. **Some of us may need to self-isolate but we don't need to be isolated.**
As you know, we have had to suspend our Sunday services in the parish church. I am advised that weddings, funerals and baptisms can still go ahead but the latest advice from our bishop is that the numbers attending should be limited to five people. Obviously we must play our part in limiting the risk of spreading infection.

This is still the 850th anniversary of Pyecombe Church. Unfortunately it is likely we will have to postpone the various celebratory events that had been planned for this year but the church will remain open as usual for private prayer and a place to reflect, so please feel free to pop in if you would like to. **For 850 years our church has stood at the heart of our community through many troubled times and may be a symbol of hope still.**

You might like to join in a national day of prayer or simply to light a candle and place it in your window at 7.00 p.m. on Sunday 22 March in solidarity with others as a light in the darkness. You will be joining with thousands of others across the country.

You might find this prayer be helpful:
Lord Jesus Christ, you taught us to love our neighbour, and to care for those in need as if we were caring for you. In this time of anxiety, give us strength to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick, and to assure the isolated of our love, and your love, for your name's sake. Amen.
In these challenging times, it is good to be reminded that we can draw strength from God, from ourselves, from our families, from our friends and from our neighbours.

With every blessing in these challenging times,
Revd Tim Harford

850Celebrations

A peaceful oasis in a hectic world

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

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.

Pew Platter

What a special year this is for the Village Church. 850 years it has stood guard over our ever changing village and what changes those have been in those years!!!

We will have lots of different things going on through the year, so do come along and find out more about the village you live in.

At the end of last year we had the Harvest Festival in October when we take time out of our busy lives to give thanks for the food we eat, and the beauty that surrounds us. Again in November at the Remembrance Service we gave thanks for those villagers and all who have their lives for us.

In December, as well as the Village Choir who join us for all our special services, we again welcomed Mid Sussex Brass Band who help start our Christmas celebrations.

The gales and heavy rain at the start of this year have made us all feel a bit down, but to see the snowdrops in flower near the gate in the churchyard give us a sign better things are on the way.

Please join us, for our many events and services and help make it a very special year.

Thank you.

The Church Team.

Geoff and Doris Lee

Some of you may have noticed that a new bench donated by the family has been installed outside the church on Church Lane. On that bench you can see a plaque commemorating my parents Geoff and Doris Lee who lived in the village from 1959 to 2017 just 2 years short of an impressive 60 years.
They had met during the 2nd WW when Geoff had been stationed in Newhaven, Doris's home town. They married soon after the war ended and Geoff following in the footsteps of his father who had been a sergeant in the Met joined the Police. At first he worked and they lived in Burgess Hill but soon after the birth of my brother Nick in 1955 he was posted to Broadoak as the local village bobby. It was all very Heartbeat.

1959 he relocated to Pyecombe and we moved into the Police House on London Road, situated between the two halves of the village. It is my understanding that the house was built at the end of the 1920s and the intention had been to build either side in a ribbon development. For whatever reason this never happened and right up to the time it was demolished it stood alone. From here Geoff ventured forth on his patrols whilst myself and Nick attended the village school crossing the A23 to walk up the now blocked off lane to the village seat of learning.

All the village children, 5-11, attended and as there were only 30+ of us you can imagine how difficult planning for age related teaching was for the two teachers involved. Miss Copping was my first head but after a year she left and Miss Bartholomew arrived and she and Miss Steyning taught in the village until the school's demise.

Geoff and Doris were fully involved in village life. Aside from dealing with rural miscreants Dad took the boys for football every Friday afternoon and both helped out at school and church events. Including I recall at the school fete and it's fancy dress competition where I, encased in a cardboard Police Box constructed by Doris, entered as a cardboard Tardis! Geoff relished his role as the village Bobby covering not only Pyecombe but Poynings, Fulking and Edburton. In part this was due to the fact that he was, in the main, left to his own devices by his superiors. As long as he logged on and off on his they were happy and left him alone. But also because he loved the sheer variety of what he had to deal with; criminal activity, domestic disputes, the occasional discovery of an unexplored mortar shell left over from when the surrounding downland was used as a training ground for Canadian troops based in the area, foot and mouth, motor accidents, the list goes on.

Perhaps one of his strangest and potentially most ominous roles related to the Cold War and the perceived threat of nuclear Armageddon! In the late 60s and early 70s there was still fear that a missile attack was a real and present danger. But Pyecombe was prepared because in our living room there lurked a grey box the sole purpose of which was to emit an audible warning indicating that annihilation was on its way. PC Lee's role on hearing the shrieking speaker was to head to his garage and the air raid siren that was kept there, pull it from its crate and start cranking.

Thus forewarned, residents had 4, minus however long it had taken him to commence cranking, minutes to whitewash their windows and crawl under the kitchen table. All rather futile and probably why Pyecombe never actually heard the siren during practice sessions Geoff just didn't see the point of worrying people!

One of his most difficult tasks was dealing with the horrendous accidents that occurred on a regular basis on the A23. Fatalities and serious injuries were commonplace and as the local policeman he was often first at the scene dealing with the consequences. Sometimes these were close to home, literally, as on at least two occasions cars took the corner near the house too fast and ended up in our front garden. Usually an arrest was made!

When we first arrived at Pyecombe Geoff's transport consisted of a sit up and beg black bicycle. I still remember the red light disappearing up the road as he cycled off on one of his 8 hour night shifts. An upgrade to motorcycles followed; a rumbling BSA and a smoother Triumph before the arrival of the Pandas. First a Morris Minor van and then a saloon. Both had a top speed of 65mph so progress was leisurely and speeding motorists had a better than even chance of avoiding apprehension.

Perhaps the fastest Geoff ever carried out his constabulary duties was when he was called upon to ride in a helicopter. There had been a robbery in Brighton and the perpetrators had headed North before abandoning their car and heading off onto the Downs. Local knowledge was called for and who better to provide it than the local man, Geoff Lee. A Coastguard Helicopter was commandeered and landed on the golf course where he boarded and spent the next hour looking for villains amongst the sheep. They were never found but as he said the views were fantastic!

Mum and Dad loved it at Pyecombe but nothing stays unchanged. The closure of the school in the late 1960's hit the village hard with its children bussed out to other village establishments. The blacksmiths shut down with passing of Sean Black, the village shop fell victim to altered shopping patterns and the green and cream Southdown buses ran less frequently. Policing also changed. The concept of having a Policeman dedicated to and living in the area they policed was considered old fashioned and was replaced by the notions of rapid response and centralisation. Thus the Police Station/House was closed and Geoff after working in Henfield eventually transferred to the Crown Court at Lewes where he remained until his retirement. Deemed surplus to requirements the house was put on the market and keen to remain in their home and the village Doris and Geoff bought it. For a while they continued working, he as a paralegal and she at WHS before they finished and settled down to a tranquil life in Pyecombe. He, keeping busy as the Parish Clerk and she with her painting and meetings with old friends. However further change was in the offing courtesy of the Highways Agency. Who decided to finally begin long planned improvements to the A23 by creating a dual carriageway at the bottleneck between Dale Hill and Pangdene.

The Old Police House was in the way and was to be demolished and Geoff and Doris had to relocate. What followed was a long drawn out battle to remain in Pyecombe. They loved the village and wanted to stay so they fought over a number of years for compensation and then permission to build a replacement next to Frithmans. Old Coppers as it was named was completed a couple of years later and they moved across the road and watched as their home for over 35 years was first used as a site office and then demolished. Where it stood is now under the northbound carriageway of the rerouted A23. Geoff and Doris loved living in their new home, tending the garden and continuing to support the village in whatever ways they could.

I remember on one occasion coming for a visit and finding them using the garage as the village polling station. Democracy amongst the bric a brac! They also took the opportunity to see some of the world visiting Norway, Russia and France.

Over the years their capabilities declined and their world became smaller until it became them in the house in the village they both loved and were determined to stay in. And they did. With help they stayed in Old Coppers up until January 2017 when Geoff fell and broke his hip. He went into the Princess Royal and Doris with failing health and unable to be left alone went into Hilgay Residential Home. Geoff died 9 months later and Doris 15 months after on Christmas Eve 2018.

Sadly neither of them ever returning to Old Coppers an aspiration they held until the very end.

Both Doris and Geoff wished to be cremated and their ashes scattered together in the village where they had lived so happily for so many years. This has now been done so they remain in Pyecombe. Indeed perhaps if you are walking on the Downs above their beloved Old Coppers strolling in the church yard or sitting on their bench you could be so kind as to say hello.

Paul and Nick Lee

Parish Council Jottings

In view of the current COVID19 restrictions the Parish Council are keen to assist the community as much as possible. In view of this we are looking to set up a coordinated volunteer group which residents finding themselves in isolation can turn to for assistance. See below:

PYECOMBE
COMMUNITY HELP

Your local Parish Council is setting up help in Pyecombe for those in isolation.

If you need help with anything, including shopping or collecting prescriptions from the pharmacy, we can help you and can arrange delivery to your door.

If you need anything, please do not hesitate to get in touch – your community can help.

Please telephone Dawn Langston – 07909 332605

CAN YOU VOLUNTEER? PLEASE?

Would you be able to help? We need volunteers to be part of our team in Pyecombe to respond to calls for help. This could involve delivery of items to local residents, shopping, or collecting prescriptions from a pharmacy. If you can help, please get in touch using the telephone number above or email;

parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk

Updates:

As you may be aware as part of the Horsham District Local Plan there is a proposed 7,000+ dwellings development on a site in open countryside in Shermanbury, Woodmancote and Henfield. This area has no adequate infrastructure for a development of this size, no bus service and no train service. This means over 14,000 extra cars could be commuting on our small rural lanes. As Hassocks has the nearest railway station there will be huge increases of traffic through Albourne, Hurstpierpoint and Pyecombe.

In order to fight this application your Parish Council has joined forces with other local parishes to form an Inter Parish Group. The group will be submitting a response to the formal consultation ending on 30th March 2020 and this can be found at www.interparishgroup.org.uk

The deadline for comments is 30th March 2020 and every response counts. We cannot highlight enough the need for you to register your objections.

Items to raise are:

- Unsustainable due lack of infrastructure.
- Impact on local highways.
- Flooding risk – the proposed site is crossed by three water courses including the River Adur.
- Loss of countryside.
- Undeliverable – Mayfield Market Town do not own at least 35% of the land shown on their plans.

All comments can be submitted via the HDC website at:

www.horsham.gov.uk/localplanreview

Or in writing to; Horsham District Council Planning, Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1 RL

I am sure that we are all relieved to finally see the removal of all the caravans along the London Road. My personal thanks to those residents who took the time to highlight these vehicles to both Mid Sussex District Council and the local policing team.

As some of you may remember in July 2017 we consulted with you on a Traffic Regulation Scheme (TRO) which will include double yellow lines along the London Road and additional signage to eliminate HGV usage of the area beyond the white gates towards Pyecombe Street.

Our TRO has finally reached the top of the West Sussex County Council list and, following recent meetings between Parish Council members and WSCC Highways Officers the final design is now being drawn up. Although we have no final date for works we hope to see this project reach a conclusion by the end of the year.

I do now have quite a few residents who have signed up to receive email updates on various items happening both throughout the parish and locally. If you would like to be added to the circulation list please email me at parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk

Members of the public are encouraged to attend our public meetings. 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 Clerk & RFO

Dawn Langston – parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk
Telephone contact – 07909 332605

Storage Request

We have been asked to highlight a request for somewhere to store the Church mower.

If you think you may be able to help please email;

parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk

850Celebrations

Pyecombe Fayre and Flower Festival 2020
July 4th -5th

Greetings all. This is an early "heads up" to tell you about this year's Pyecombe Fayre and Flower Festival. As you know, we are celebrating the **850th** year of the foundation of our lovely parish church, so your committee has decided that the **theme of the flower displays** in the church will be "**Past and Future Times"**. Knowing how creative people have been over the years with the displays, we think that this should give you plenty of scope to produce the most stunning displays the church has ever seen in its 850 years!

We will build on the success of last year's **raffle** by following the same format, i.e. a significant cash prize for the winner plus a good number of decent prizes for the other winning tickets. As last year, tickets will be delivered to the houses and sold in advance. If you have something which you would like to give away and which would make a decent prize, please let me or someone on the committee know.

The weekend will follow the same format as in previous years. The two days will run from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm, with teas and cakes being served all day, as well as a bar and the popular ploughman's lunches including a children's menu. We hope to have a few extra stalls this year as well as various musical entertainments. Also, keep your eyes open for information about the competitions such as the famous "Fancy dress dog show".

There will be one significant addition this year; the committee decided to revive the **Saturday evening barbecue**. Open to everyone, you will simply need to bring your own food. More information about this will be sent out nearer the time.

We always need volunteers and new ideas. Please phone me if you would like to be involved in any way. Our next meeting is on 7th of May.

Tim Cullen
Chairman of Pyecombe Fayre Committee
07870 360551



Pyecombe 850 Music Events

We got off to a great musical start to this special year with a spellbinding performance from the ensemble **Nymphes et Monstres.** This international quartet, based in Holland and led by Brighton young singer, Kat Carsen, treated us to a wonderfully imaginative programme communicated with energy and a high level musicianship. The attendance was very good, with a mix of people from the village and benefice along with several people who had never been to our lovely church before. (They were suitably impressed!) Although this concert was not a fundraiser, the Social Committee provided an excellent tea afterwards and raised well over £100. A big thank you to all involved!

Dates for the diary:

Saturday 18th July – "Around the World in 80 Minutes" with Pyecombe Village Choir

A fascinating programme of songs from around the world – celebrating different cultures and a wide diversity of styles, but with opportunities to sing along to some familiar songs along the way!

Friday 4th September – Sunday 6th September: Pyecombe Music Festival 850

This is a great opportunity to come together as a village and enjoy some fabulous music. Keep an eye out for further details but there are already 2 events to note:

Saturday 5th September, 3pm: Pyecombe 850 Years: a Musical Celebration

A celebration of our history in a cleverly devised programme by Jill Munday with music from different eras provided by Pyecombe Village Choir. There will be a special 850 birthday tea party in the interval!

September 6th September, 6pm: 850 Gala Concert – Pyecombe Church

We have enjoyed some outstanding performances in the Festival concerts and will look forward to welcoming many performers back for this special occasion. Proceeds will go to the church to help with the repair of the 2 porches. Let us all play a part (musical or otherwise!) in preserving this wonderful church for another 850 years and beyond!

In addition to the Festival we will be welcoming the BFS Sussex Flutes and also a Guitar and Harp Duo to give performances later this year. Do keep an eye out for these and further events!

Jane Cullen



850Celebrations

25th April 2020 Meet 11:00 am

Walk between Lewes and Pyecombe



More information can be obtained from celebrations850@yahoo.com.

850Celebrations

Celebrating 850

This year we are celebrating the 850th anniversary of Pyecombe Church. The church is the heart of our community and as such serves as not only a place of worship but also a space for concerts, festivals, fayres and community meetings. The church attracts many visitors each year including walkers and cyclists who pass along the South Downs Way and attracts tourists drawn to the history of this beautiful downland church.

To help celebrate the 850 years of Pyecombe church we have arranged a series of events, diverse in their nature, but each connecting to the church and reflecting the way the building connects us all as a community.

Walkie-Talkies

Throughout the year we have a series of three walks. The first is on the 25th April and is from Lewes to Pyecombe, ending in the church with cake and tea. Everyone is welcome and we encourage you to come along with all the family and the dog! For more details please watch out for posters, social media announcements and links to contacts at: celebrations850@yahoo.com.

The second walk is on the 9th August from Chantry Farm to Chattri. Chantry Farm has a long history of shepherding but also has been a place to care for the sick, when disease or when the war wounded needed care that could not be provided in Brighton. The walk will start at Chantry Farm and a meander through the wild flowers as we ascend Wolstonbury Hill and cross to Clayton Hill and on toward the Chattri war memorial. This memorial set in the heart of the Downs, is dedicated to the Indian servicemen who died in the First World War.

We shall then return to Chantry Farm for a video on the Bronze Age monuments and ancient archaeology that are found there along with some light refreshments. Everyone is welcome.

The third walk is a guided tour around the village and street stopping off at houses and places of specific significance to the village. Home owners will relay short stories about their homes and how the role they have played in Pyecombe history.

The Pyecombe Fayre and Flower Festival: Past and Future Times

In the summer, July 4-5th, we have our Pyecombe Fayre and Flower Festival, this year the theme is 'Past and Future Times' in keeping with the 850 celebration. This popular event is held at the church and offers the opportunity to hear live music, shop around the stalls, and enjoy wonderful homemade cakes and teas and a delicious ploughman's lunch. All set in the beautiful countryside with views across the downs.

The Ceilidh

On 9th October we have a ceilidh at Pangdean, with the Unreel Celidh band providing the music. There is a wonderful harvest feast of local organic free range sausages (vegetarian and vegan options available) and mash with autumn greens and homemade bake beans. Meringues and chocolate brownies to follow with coffee before a night of dancing. This event is hosted by Pyecombe and Poynings. (Poynings Church celebrates their 650th anniversary in 2020) and this is our joint celebration. Tickets will go on sale later in the year and we shall make announcements closer to the date with further details.

The History Event

On the 15th November we have a history event at Pangdean Farm. This will be an informal relaxed afternoon chatting and hearing the oral histories of our neighbours alongside the historical review of Pyecombe history: ancient and modern. We shall have an exhibition of artefacts, photographs and art work gathered together in this unique opportunity to see all the bits of our local history held by different people brought together.

Cake and tea will nourish our journey through what we might know of our history but also enlighten us to scandals, insights and news about where we live and how Pyecombe came to be the place it is today.

Contact Us

We welcome any artefacts, photographs or art work that you might wish to lend to the exhibition. We hope to make a digital record of the exhibition for future generations to enjoy. If you would like to contribute in any way to this event please contact Jools at: **celebrations850@yahoo.com**. This will be part of the record placed in the time capsule to be buried at the end of the year in the church grounds.

Other dates for the dairy are listed below but for more information please look out for announcements on the Pyecombe web page: **www.pyecombevillage.co.uk**

For more information and updates please look at the **Pyecombe Facebook page**.

VE Day 75th Anniversary
8th – 10th May 2020

As we look forward to joining the celebration commemorating the 75th anniversary of VE Day this year, let us take a look back to when the village held a celebration party to mark the 50th anniversary in 1995, a few years after the completion of the A23 road improvements.

The occasion was enjoyed by all who went, where past Pyecombers and present met, old acquaintances were renewed and many stories related.

Beryl Robinson, the newsletter editor at the time put together many of their stories of V.E Day which are shown here from a village newsletter in June 1995.

PYECOMBE PARISH NEWS

JUNE 1995 Number 59



VE DAY - 1945

There were indeed stories related at the VE Day Party! People's memories of VE Day 1945 are alive and vivid. At that time on the home front, food and clothing were rationed and there was still a blackout after dark. It was nearly a year since the Normandy landings and the Allied forces had been fighting their way across the continent. The Ardennes struggle and the Arnhem disaster - 'a bridge too far' brought so many casualities, but finally the Rhine was crossed.

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A week after the invasion the first V1s, the 'doodlebugs', came over Pyecombe - racketty, pilotless machines - on their deadly way to London. When the noise stopped the 'thing' dropped and exploded. From the train, devastation in Purley showed where many had dropped short. The V2 rockets were not visible nor audible here - they just dropped on London with huge and deadly explosions.

The Downs were out of bounds because the troops had trained there, and there were unexploded bombs, land mines and anti-personnel devices. The golf course was a churned-up mess, the club house a ruin, as was the Dyke Hotel and the small farmsteads which used to be dotted along the top of the Downs.

Then in the spring of 1945, we went to the cinemas to see Richard Dimbleby's horrific film of the Belsen concentration camp. So, although the forces were advancing rapidly across Europe, morale had been low and to many VE Day came almost as a wonderful surprise; no more blackout, no more fire watching nights sleeping in the office one night a week, no more A.R.P. (Air Raid Precautions) duties. (Pyecombe's A.R.P. post was at Hill Top in Church Lane.)

Pyecombe's civilians were working hard in the war effort; in the Womens' Land Army, in the Fire Service, and in keeping families going, with all the war time shortages.

As Churchill said, we could allow ourselves a brief celebration, but in the knowledge that the war in the Far East was far from over. and the fear of many more Allied casualties to come.

Many Pyecombe people were in the forces overseas. There were tales at the party of two in the womens' services who were in Belgium, one in Brussels and one in Antwerp. One can imagine the celebrations in liberated Belgium, and the enormous all-night parties in the streets and squares of the capital.

One Pyecombe serviceman had had U.K. leave after the Rhine crossing to get married, but was by then back with his unit in the northernmost part of Germany and over the border into occupied Denmark, where the celebrations were loud and joyous.

For one Pyecombe family there must have been so much thankfulness that their son, a P.O.W. for five years, survived a winter march from Poland to Munich lasting from January until April, and for whom they had never given up hope.

Others at the party had tales to tell of the celebrations in the streets of Brighton; of a party in The Street; of the national celebration in Hyde Park; of jollity in The Plough; of quiet thankfulness that a fiancé had survived, but worry that he would be sent off to the Far East; of thankfulness that, in Europe at least, there would be no more casualties, but sadness for the ones who would not be coming back.

Fifty years on, the commemorations almost mirrored the first VE Day. With television and the progress in modern communications and the tales of the veterans, perhaps the younger generations could catch a feeling of how it was.

But, sadly, they will not now hear the nightingales singing all night by the Muddleswood Crossroads, as they did in 1945.



‘Pyecombe Today’ Photographic Competition

As part of the 850th anniversary celebrations taking place this year, the photographic competition draws to a conclusion in July.

All photographs entered will need to be associated with Pyecombe and can relate to architecture, environment, flora and fauna, images of livestock, but not children.

Submit your entries to: - pyecombephotocompetition@yahoo.com

By entering into this competition you are passing us the copyright for publication, should the photograph be chosen and used for a calendar next year.

With the competition in full swing, the closing date for entries is 20th June 2020, when selected entries will be assembled for display and judging at the Pyecombe Fayre weekend, 3th & 5th July 2020.

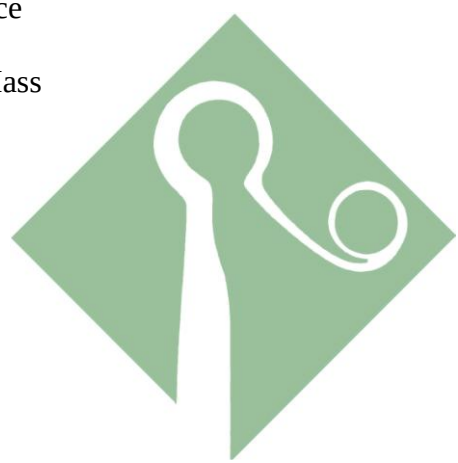
The overall winning entry will receive £100.00.

David Wilson.

850 Celebrations

Save the date 2020

25th April	Walk to Lewes Priory
31st May	Plant Sale
4-5th July	Pyecombe Fayre and Flower Festival
9th August	Walk Chantry Farm to Chattri
5-6th September	Music Festival
9th October	Ceilidh
11th October	Harvest Festival
15th November	Oral History, images and artefacts
12th December	Christmas Fayre
13th December	Carol Service
24th December	Midnight Mass



Editor Required

We are in need of a new Editor to collate and produce the quarterly newsletter on a voluntary basis.

Ideally a local resident would be perfect. No previous journalistic experience is necessary! ☺

If you think this is something you would like to consider please contact;

parishcouncil@pyecombe.org.uk

850 Celebrations

The next newsletter is due out in June. 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.

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

Many thanks. Dawn Langston (ed)

This newsletter is sponsored by the parish council and is part of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (publication schemes).
Pyecombe Village newsletter is printed on recycled paper.
Ed. *Dawn Langston*

