

ALCISTON BERWICK SELMESTON



VILLAGE NEWS

DECEMBER 2023

◇ VILLAGE NEWS

Advertising is coordinated by Brian Calcott. Tel. 07999 788618.

Distribution is coordinated by Jeremy and Valerie Shaw. Tel: 01323 811567.

The Production Team is Jane Anderson and Martin Chilvers.

Contributions, Photos, etc (other than advertising requests) should be sent to Martin by the 12th of the month by email: empty.sea@outlook.com

They can also be passed to one of the coordinators:

Jane Anderson at Old Postman's Cottage, Alciston Tel: 01323 870075.

Valerie Shaw at Selmeston House, Selmeston Tel: 01323 811567.

Laurie Tinsley, Wynsford, Berwick Tel: 01323 870895.

Donations

Financial donations to the Parish News are gratefully received.

Cheques payable to "Parish News" can be passed to: The Treasurer, Brian Calcott at 2 Railway Cottages, Station Road, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6TA.

Alternatively, electronic donations can be made to Barclays Bank - Account No. 70650625; Sort code 20-49-76.

◇ CHURCH CONTACTS

Benefice Priests

Revd Peter Blee Rector of Berwick and Vicar of Selmeston with Alciston

The Parsonage, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6SR

Tel: 01323 870512 Email: peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk

Revd Shirley Pearce Assistant Priest

The Vicarage, Wilmington, Polegate, BN26 5SL

Tel: 01323 318231 Email: revshirleym@gmail.com

Shirley Pearce's 'on duty' days are Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday.

Churchwardens

Alciston - Michèle Boys Tel: 01323 870623

Berwick - Andy Williamson Tel: 01323 870163 / Paul Lewis Tel: 01323 870927

Selmeston - Jan Matthews Tel: 01323 811380

Benefice Administrator

Jane Grutchfield Email: benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

◇ VILLAGE CONTACTS

Parish Council Clerks

Alciston - Sandy Thomas Email: alcistonparishmeeting@gmail.com

Berwick - Alison Stevens Tel: 01323 460007 Email: berwickparishcouncil@aol.com

Selmeston - Bryan Stevens Tel: 07799 862765 Email: selmestonparishmeeting@gmail.com

Village Hall / Field Hire

Berwick Village Hall - Thea Eastmead Tel: 01323 871218 Email: theaeastmead77@gmail.com

Berwick Field - Carole Vine Tel: 07341 660046 berwickfieldhire@btinternet.com

Thank You

We are very grateful to receive a donation this month from Cuckmere Buses.

Arlington's Christmas Village Market and Coffee Morning

*10.00 am - Noon,
Tuesday 12th December
at Arlington Village Hall.*

All are welcome, we will be pleased to see you. There will be fresh bread, cakes, quiches, local eggs, other regular stalls with Christmas goodies, a raffle in aid of St. Wilfrid's Hospice and festive refreshments.

Arlington's Pop-Up Museum will also be taking place at the same time. December's focus will be 'The Infant King'. The play, performed at Christmas time by local people at St. Pancras Church was produced by Patsy Webb's parents, Rev. Bill and Jean Hardy, who lived in Arlington at that time.

Thank you to all who regularly come to support this community event, please bring your friends, and if you have not visited before you will be very welcome.

At the November market the village hall was buzzing once again with people chatting, visiting stalls and browsing in the museum which featured Phil Wooller's recollections of WW2. It was lovely to see so many faces from the village and also past residents of Arlington.

For further market information please contact Anne Hope:
Tel. 01323 486219,
Email anntonyhope@gmail.com.
For further museum information please contact Wendy Holmes:

Tel. 07889 689844,
Email talkingteapot@yahoo.co.uk.

Pauline Jackson

Firle and Beddingham Women's Institute

There was no meeting in November - we felt it was going to be far too difficult to come out of Firle village after our meeting with the roadworks happening between Beddingham and Middle Farm. In December we have our Candlelit Supper which we are all looking forward to.

In January we will start our programme for 2024 and we have some exciting and interesting speakers lined up so I will let you know month by month when we are meeting. Please do join us if you would like to. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month in Firle Village Hall at 7.30 pm.

*Rosemary Norris
President Tel: 07784 707016*

Village HUB

*10.30 am - 12.30 pm
Monday 18th December
at Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall*

Donations for the Christmas Food Bank Collection will be greatly received this month.

We will be serving refreshments, delicious tea and coffee as well as homemade cake. So why not join us, pop in anytime during the morning. It is open to everyone - bring your little ones for a run around and meet up with neighbours and friends of all ages.

This month the Church will be selling homemade goodies for you to take home and enjoy, including a selection of meal deals.



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Please contact any of the committee below if you have any questions or need help with transport to and from the hall.

Contact: Thea 07772 155772,
Helen 07969 732109,
Mairi 07582 938185
or Janie 07785 940915.

Rachel Lewis

Alciston and Selmeston Villages Christmas Party

*Saturday 9th December
at Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall*

There's lots of fun in store making this an evening to remember!

£5 per ticket and bring a dish of your favourite food to share. Christmas Tombola too, donations gratefully received.

Not one to be missed, so book your tickets soon - last bookings taken on Wednesday 6th December.

(Same contact details as for the Village Hub.)

Rachel Lewis

Pilgrim Poetry Group

Antony Mair has requested that I remind you that there is no Pilgrim Poetry Group in December and that it recommences at 2.30 pm on Monday 22nd January in Berwick Church.

Michèle Boys


The Life and Achievements of Frederick Stanley Mockford

*7 pm Saturday 27th January 2024 at
Alciston and Selmeston Village Hall*

Graham Wratten will be giving an illustrated talk on the life and achievements of Frederick Stanley Mockford, who originated the international "Mayday" distress call. He was born in Seaford and is buried at Selmeston. It will not be ticketed, but a



Alciston, Berwick and Selmeston churches warmly invite you to our Christingle, Carol and Christmas Day services – times and dates are given at the end of the magazine.



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collection taken for the benefit of Selmeston church, and the bar will be open.

Graham Wratten

A Piece of Work - A Theatre Show with James Rowland:

7.00 pm, Sunday 4th February at Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall

Tickets £12. Suitable for ages 15+. Show is 70 minutes, no interval.

'A riveting, remarkable hour of theatre.'
***** The Guardian

After a small hiatus, theatre is returning to the village with this award-winning show. Through his trademark mix of music, song, story, James will paint a picture of our country in all its beauty, grime, pain and kindness, over one heart rending and hilarious evening. Book your tickets now.

Online: www.applause.org.uk/whats-on
Email: bookings@southdownsvillagehall.org
Text: Megan on 07846 260350

1 Corinthians 13 Christmas Style

If I decorate my house perfectly with lovely plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights, and shiny glass balls, but do not show love to my family -
I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas biscuits, preparing gourmet meals, and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family -
I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, sing carols in the nursing home, and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family -
it profits me nothing.

If I trim the tree with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties, and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ,
I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking
to hug the child.

Love sets aside the decorating
to kiss the husband.

Love is kind, though harried and tired.
Love doesn't envy another home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of your way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return, but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things,
believes all things,
hopes all things,
and endures all things.

Love never fails.

Computer games will break;
pearl necklaces will be lost;
golf clubs will rust.
But giving the gift of love will endure.

© *Sharon Jaynes*

Quizzed by the QuizMeister

My wife and I unfortunately missed the ever-excellent village quiz this October, so I offered our apologies to the QuizMaster, Andrew Thomas, to which he replied, "I have a special question just for you: What is the connection with Selmeston and Star Wars?"

Unable to use 'The Force', I had to admit defeat. Andrew responded: "Richard Marquand was a film director who lived in Selmeston for a short while, with his mother and father. Richard was the director on 'Return of The Jedi', the final film in the trilogy". †

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Although the Director, Richard gave himself a cameo role in the film of the AT-ST pilot Major Marquand. He also voiced EV-9D9 Jabba's droid. (Richard sadly died of a stroke on 4th September 1987 aged 49, in Penshurst Kent, and is buried in Royal Tunbridge Wells).

Andrew continued, "As a matter of fact, his mother Rachel, a schoolteacher, and his father, the Right Honourable Hilary Adair Marquand PC, have a joint headstone in Selmeston Churchyard".

From the Resident Poet: Before the Normans

We walked here once, where you now tread:
we breathed the air you savour.

You can see our traces
in hilltop barrows, in the bend of roads
that curve round ancient sites. Dig,
and you will find our beads, our spears and axes,
buckles for the belts that held our tunics.

Museums show the gilded swords and daggers
we left behind. Scholars speculate
about our food, our homes and lives. We let
possessions tell our tale, our voices mute.

But we're beside you, jostling in a crowd
of spirits hidden from your sight.
We see how your concerns - food, family -
repeat our own, and how you too confront
the mystery of what there is beyond.
One day you'll join us here, and learn.

Antony Mair

†Further research reveals that Hilary was born in Cardiff 24th December 1901 and died in Hellingly on the 6th November 1972. He was the MP for Cardiff East from 1945-1950, also the Paymaster General 1947-1948, Minister of Pensions 1948-1951, and Minister of Health and a Privy Councillor, all under the then Prime Minister, Clement Attlee.

The Old Stores Flower Bed

The flower bed at the front of The Old Stores has been spruced up ready for planting in Spring. The raised bed at the front of the former shop between the pub and the garage has been cleared of weeds and dug over. Villagers are welcome to add any plants or shrubs to add a touch of colour next year, given its prominent location as a focal point for passers-by when waiting at the crossing. The bed is currently rather empty with just a conifer and a couple of Verbenas.

Jamie Cheshire
jamiescopy@hotmail.co.uk

Public Transport

Public transport is vital for ensuring that young and old can get to work, school and visit friends and family. Locally, as with many rural villages, some places are better supported than others for access to buses and trains, but there have been some recent improvements locally that should make it easier for people.

Firstly, we now have the Flexi bus locally which is the new on demand service run by East Sussex County

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Council which is for our rural villages. This service needs to be booked a short time in advance and has no fixed route so it can take you anywhere within your local zone. It accepts concessionary and £2 bus fares, and you can book online or by phone. People who have used the service have said it is a terrific way to travel. Please do visit the East Sussex Website to find out your local zone if you are in a rural village.

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roads-transport/public/flexibus>

Given that the £2 bus fare announced by the Government last year has been so successful they have recently announced that it will be extended to December 2024. This means bus travel will remain affordable for people and it is why it is so important that it is also accepted on the flexi bus.

For train passengers we now have the new rolling stock for the Seaford branch line which will provide more comfortable seating and toilets. Several local stations are also getting additional stops as rail passenger numbers start to increase post covid. The first is for Newhaven on the route between Brighton and Seaford. From December, there will be additional weekday stops introduced to create an hourly service all day, which is increased to half-hourly at peak times. This will improve the service for this area of Newhaven and help improve connections with the port.

You may also be interested to know that there will be stops introduced for Glynde and Berwick stations on the last train from Brighton to Eastbourne from Monday to Saturday. This currently departs Brighton at 23:32 and means that the last train of an evening from Brighton to Glynde and Berwick will no longer be the 21:56

departure, significantly improving the transport options people must stay in Brighton late into the evening.

With the news that the London travelcard is also to be retained for rail tickets to and from Sussex there are many good reasons to choose public transport for travel.

Maria Caulfield MP

December's Gardener's Diary

If you have not yet done it, you can lift the last of your Leeks and Parsnips before the ground gets frozen, and heel them into a trench beside a path. They will keep for months like this.

Remove the yellow leaves of all brassicas as they are no use to the plant and may harbour pests and disease. Dig over empty borders and pile manure on top to let the worms and frosts break up the clods.

You can cover heavy soil with a plastic sheet to keep it drier. This makes for easier digging in the winter.

If you want to grow something at this time of year, try mushrooms under the stairs. It's something different and they taste nice!

Lisa Collington

Recipe of the Month: Paul Hollywood's Stollen

Ingredients

500 g strong flour
100 g caster sugar
150g softened unsalted butter
250ml milk
10g fast acting yeast
10 g salt
Pinch ground nutmeg
Pinch ground cloves
½ tsp vanilla extract
2 drops almond extract

Chloe Burrell

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55 g finely chopped blanched almonds
200 g raisins
100 g currants
125 g chopped mixed peel
25 g melted butter
225 g marzipan

To serve

25 g melted butter
2 tbsp icing sugar

Method

Put the flour and sugar in a large bowl. Add the yeast on one side of the bowl and the salt on the other. Add the softened butter and 200 ml of the milk and stir together. Add the remaining milk and knead well on a generously floured surface for 6 to 7 minutes until smooth and pliable.

Mix together the nutmeg, clove, vanilla and almond extracts, almonds, dried fruit and mixed peel in a bowl. Add the dough on top and knead from the

outside into the centre. When everything has been incorporated return to the bowl, cover with cling film and leave to rise for 1 to 1½ hours in a warm place until double in size.

Flatten the dough and roll out on a lightly floured surface to a rectangle of about 45 cm by 35 cm. Brush with melted butter. Roll out the marzipan to about 25 cm by 15 cm and place on top of the dough. Roll the dough up to enclose the marzipan and transfer to a lined baking sheet. Cover and leave to rise for 45 minutes to 1 hour until risen and doubled in size.

Preheat the oven to 190°C/170°C fan/375°F/Gas 5 and bake for 1 hour. Remove from the oven, brush with melted butter and dust with icing sugar. Serve cold.

Valerie Shaw



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Family Support Work (FSW)

We are in one of our busiest times of the year now, as we juggle the many needs of our families as well as all the preparations for Advent and Christmas. Parties are planned, hamper packing dates are scheduled and we are getting daily calls from churches and other organisations asking what gifts would be most appropriate this year. Thank you to everybody who is supporting us this year with food, presents, financial donations or by volunteering - we are incredibly grateful.

Away from the festive planning, things remain very difficult for our families with the increased energy costs over the winter months contributing to financial problems. We are very grateful to anybody who is supporting our 'Share the Warmth' winter fuel campaign, which makes a huge

difference to these families who are struggling. There are still very long waiting lists for specialist services such as SEN support for children or access to mental health professionals, so our practitioners are vital sources of support to families in these circumstances.

Funding continues to be challenging, with so many charities seeking support from grant funders and individual donors alike. We really do value all the support we receive from churches and their congregations as well as local groups including Rotary and Lions clubs. We are planning a skydive for 2024, so if there are any thrill seekers out there who think they might like to join us, do get in touch with the fundraising team on 01273 041401 or by email fundraising@familysupportwork.org.uk.

October's work in numbers

- ◆ 258 individual visits and 1181 calls with families supporting 324 adults and 301 children
- ◆ 39 supported meetings with other agencies
- ◆ 48 group sessions held supporting 589 parents and 334 children
- ◆ 108 food deliveries made

Prayer points

- ◆ Pray that all our staff will find an appropriate balance between work and rest during the upcoming busy Advent and Christmas period
- ◆ Give thanks for a very generous individual donation we have recently received
- ◆ Pray that a very important grant funding meeting taking place in early December will have a positive outcome

Nikki Kerr, FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing

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Holly

I'm sure you'll agree that these are crazy times, folks. Back in Ancient Rome they had a festival - Saturnalia - which saw their society turn upside down for a week each December. It seems Saturnalian traditions of chaos and mayhem are now the daily norm for us Brits but, as we career towards Christmas, we have another thing in common with Saturnalia. We will soon be paying our respects to the Holly tree.

Holly has been celebrated in many traditions over the centuries because, as a native evergreen, its vibrancy in the dead of winter could easily be mistaken for immortality. Holly was the sacred tree of Saturn, the Roman god of agriculture. In pagan tradition, the Holly King ruled over the Oak King from Midsummer to Midwinter. Holly was easily adopted by Christians, who saw many links between the tree and the life of Christ. Today, Holly remains a centrepiece of our Christmas decorations, cards and cakes.

Each Holly tree is either male or female. While both produce delicate white flowers in May, it's only the female Holly that bears a berry as red as any blood. When these berries are produced in profusion, it's taken to be a sign of an oncoming hard winter - although in reality it's the outcome of a successful spring. Holly's prickles provide protection for nesting birds, their flower buds are food for the Holly Blue butterfly's caterpillar and their ripe berries are essential for thrushes.



Christmas Recycling and Rubbish Collections

Usual collection day:		Revised collection day:	
Monday	25 Dec	→	Wednesday 27 Dec
Tuesday	26 Dec	→	Thursday 28 Dec
Wednesday	27 Dec	→	Friday 29 Dec
Thursday	28 Dec	→	Saturday 30 Dec
Friday	29 Dec	→	Tuesday 2 Jan
Monday	1 Jan	→	Wednesday 3 Jan
Tuesday	2 Jan	→	Thursday 4 Jan
Wednesday	3 Jan	→	Friday 5 Jan
Thursday	4 Jan	→	Saturday 6 Jan
Friday	5 Jan	→	Monday 8 Jan
Monday	8 Jan	→	Tuesday 9 Jan
Tuesday	9 Jan	→	Wednesday 10 Jan
Wednesday	10 Jan	→	Thursday 11 Jan
Thursday	11 Jan	→	Friday 12 Jan
Friday	12 Jan	→	Saturday 13 Jan

■ ■ Normal collections resume from Monday 15 January 2024

Garden Waste collections are suspended from Monday 25 December 2023 and resume from Monday 8 January 2024.

Check your collection days online: www.wealden.gov.uk

If you're after a tree filled with folklore, then Holly must take a bow. So, if you're planning to deck your halls with boughs of the stuff this Christmas, here's a quick user guide.

First off, never cut down a Holly tree - that's guaranteed bad luck, a superstition which has spared many Holly trees from the woodsman's axe. If you bring Holly into your home at Christmas, it'll help protect you from those pesky festive faeries. Only female Holly leaves under your pillow will allow you to predict your future in your dreams.

Oh, and don't forget to get rid of your Holly decorations before Twelfth Night (but don't burn them, that's bad luck too). Holly trees will protect you against lightning strikes (I'm not sure if this has been scientifically proven so don't blame me if you still get zapped). And don't eat the berries, they're poisonous, but if you have Smallpox, you can drink an infusion made from the leaves!



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Stick to those rules folks and you'll have a peaceful Christmas. Me? I've had enough of the state of the world today. I'm going to pour some wine, put on my toga and pretend I'm in ancient Rome. Somebody pass me my fiddle...

*Michael Blencowe
Sussex Wildlife Trust*

From the Parsonage

Many years ago, I visited Bethlehem and the Church of The Nativity. I went below ground level into the confines of a richly decorated cave and was shown a silver star on the floor and told it was the spot where Jesus was born. Very few Christians remain in Bethlehem. Though it is in the West Bank and under Palestinian governance, you cannot get into the city without going through an Israeli checkpoint. The church was under siege by the Israeli Defence Force when some Palestinian militants took refuge there in 2002.

If one thinks back to the time of Christ one wonders what the atmosphere was like then, living under Roman occupation. An occupying force lives with the insecurity of uprising and will often use fear to control and suppress. The occupation generates its antagonists simply by virtue of its own existence. In His time many thought Jesus might be a leader who would liberate the people from their occupation, which was many thought the Messiah would do. Amongst his followers Jesus chose Simon. He was referred to as a 'Zealot'. Little is known about him, but the name suggests an angry, possibly extreme individual, passionate about freedom and justice for his people.

Jesus had other ideas and a different focus. Just as I went beneath ground

to see his place of birth, so He taught people to go below the surface to the root of problems. He replaced the commandment of 'an eye for eye' with 'offer the other cheek' too, for the attacker to hit. Was this Jesus' lesson in pacifism? He guided people to go into their own heart and to find their own forgiveness and healing first before doing anything else.

Whilst researching at a Commonwealth War Grave I learnt about a movement in the Second World War called 'The Silent Minute'. It was the idea of W. Tudor-Pole in 1940, and had the approval of the government. The BBC took it on board and the broadcast of Big Ben on November 10th 1940, marked the first time this silent minute was kept. The movement was revived in America after the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Centre by Dorothy Forster. A shepherd sitting on a hill, fishermen sitting by water, a Palestinian in a wheelchair cutting handheld crosses from a plank of olive wood, monks and nuns in their convents and monasteries at prayer. Does stillness and silence make any difference?

Our churches are places where one can usually keep a minute of silence with intention and focus on peace. As we enter a church, we hope to enter more deeply into ourselves. At Christmas they become places where people can go to connect, through prayer and imagination, with that place where Jesus was born, into that presence and that peace which came into our world in its brokenness and fear with power and a message of love and forgiveness.

Wishing everyone Joy and Peace this Christmas.

Peter Blee



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CHURCH SERVICES AND MORNING PRAYER

Please visit the benefice websites to check on services and times:

www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk or
www.berwickchurch.org.uk .

Sunday 3rd December

09:30 Arlington Holy Communion
09:30 Selmeaton Holy Communion
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion
11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Sunday 10th December

09.30 Alciston Holy Communion (BCP)
09:30 Arlington Holy Communion
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion
11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Sunday 17th December

10.00 Alciston Holy Communion
15.00 Arlington Carol Service
15.00 Berwick Carol Service

Sunday 24th December

15.00 Selmeaton Christingle Service
16.00 Wilmington Christingle Service
23.45 Berwick Midnight Mass

Christmas Day 25th December

08.00 Alciston Holy Communion (BCP)

09:30 Arlington Holy Communion
09:30 Selmeaton Holy Communion
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion
11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Sunday 31st December

10.00 Selmeaton United Benefice Service

Prayer

9.30 am each Wednesday at Berwick church,
(On the first Wednesday of the month there is Holy Communion (BCP) instead.)
5.00 pm each Thursday at Wilmington church.

To receive a weekly notification about services (the Sunday Link) please email the Benefice Administrator at
benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

Pastoral Prayer or Talk

Peter Blee and Shirley Pearce are available to speak to people on the phone and are also able to pray with people on request in church at Morning Prayer and to offer help in any way possible.

Telephone: 01323 870512, 01323 318231 or
Email peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk,
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