

ROSTRUM APRIL 2011

VILLAGE DIARY

April

- 4 By noon for nomination papers for Parish Councillors to be with Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Kings Hill
- 5 Parish Council Meeting – 7.30 followed immediately by a Planning Committee meeting
- 9 Bash the Trash – 10.00 am Pavilion
- 12 Annual Church Parish Meeting – Church – 8pm
- 14 W.I. More Fun with Maths – Mr. Norman Evans – 2.30 pm
- 16 Church and churchyard Spring-clean – 9.30am - noon
- 20 History Society – Andrew Clarke – Maidstone's Fires and Floods – Village Hall 7.40 pm
- 30 Annual Plant Sale – Churchyard – 10am-4pm

May

- 5 Parish Council and Borough Council Elections and Referendum on Alternative Voting System
- 10 Annual Parish Council Meeting (NOTE: This is a change due to Parish Council Elections on May 5) immediately followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee
- 8 Footpaths Walk – Bluebell Walk, Village Hall 2.30pm
- 12 Women's Institute – Hall - 2.30pm – Annual Meeting, Resolutions and Silent Auction
- 18 History Society – Wine and Cheese – Blackthorn Trust Garden Room 7.30 pm
- 21 Kent Chamber Choir Concert – Church – 7.30pm
- 24 Annual Parish Meeting – School Hall - 7.30pm

A date for your diary

**Tuesday 24 May at 7.30 in the School Hall
Annual Parish Council meeting**

This year the council have arranged for guests from the
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust
Graham Goddard will talk about the new Pembury Hospital
he will be accompanied by
Gillian Duffy, Operational Lead for Women and Children's Services
So come along to learn about the new hospital
And take the opportunity to ask questions

VILLAGE PEOPLE

Thank you to the talented Tony Gosby for our cover pictures which this year show the pubs of Wateringbury, past and present.

TRIBUTE TO MO NEATE 1944 – 2011

Dearest Mo,

This will be a duller place without you enriching and brightening it as you have for the last 29 years. You were one of life's 'doers'; a woman who got things done – and how beautifully you did them. It was you that got the Guides & Scouts their splendid new HQ and they'd have died of hunger without all those years (was it 10?) of scrummy yummy camp food (whisked up under primitive, often impossible conditions.) The Parish Councillors quaked in their boots when you joined them (you could be a formidable lady!), but as always you set to work and won their respect. I'd need a book to list everything you have done for this village; never saying 'no', and never facing defeat.

Whether entertaining, sewing, cooking pizza's to order, working miracles with sugar icing, dressing Ice Queens or witches, constructing a magnificent banner for The Players or running the bar for those

ever thirsty thespians; you did it with a smile, with aplomb and looking as though you had just stepped out of a bandbox. All this whilst battling a vicious, pernicious form of cancer.

You used to say, "When I grow old I shall wear purple." Well, Mo you'll never grow old, but I think you wore a little purple all your life. I'll miss you, my friend, we all will. Until we meet again ... then just wait.... I can hear those celestial corks popping now!

Love Jenny xxx Ps. I've popped a lippy in the coffin with you, so don't panic! Hope you like the colour. x

RICHARD OGILVIE 2.8.1941 – 9.3.2011

The beginning of a long acquaintance with Richard was through the words "Have you seen the fox?" It was his line in an early pantomime, spoken at the Matinee by Dusty McLellan because he was busy with his stall at Tonbridge market! A pressured life running his own business, which gave him his independence but which didn't prevent him sharing in other productions down the years. The most memorable for me was Rusty Blades the knife thrower in one of the Players reviews and he emerged from 'retirement' to play a hop picker in the 2009 production 'From Sunrise to Candlelight - A Hopping Day in Kent'

Once committed he was always keen to do the best, qualities which I'm sure were reflected throughout his life. A 'good companion' to have encountered who will be sadly missed. Barry Fisher

HISTORY SOCIETY

Our speaker in April is Andrew Clarke who is coming along to tell us about "Maidstone's Fires and Floods". Andrew, who has lived and worked (Clarkes Furniture Store) in Maidstone all his life, is a keen photographer and has recorded many incidents in and around Maidstone with his camera. His talk will bring back memories for some and inform others of Maidstone as it used to be.

Bob Ogley, one of the history society's favourite speakers came back in February to tell us about his Life as a Newspaper Reporter. When Bob was 12 years old he and a friend decided to walk from Sevenoaks to Hastings, arriving at his friends aunt's house well after midnight accompanied by the police. Their story was published in the local newspaper sparking in Bob an interest to become a reporter, he left school at 16 to start a very interesting and eventful career spanning many years.

Initially Bob worked for a Sevenoaks local paper, as a junior reporter, cycling around the villages and reporting on local events, then in 1961 he went out to Southern Rhodesia to work for the Rhodesia Herald, reporting on political meetings, where he met and mixed with many local people some of whom have since become household names. On returning to England he joined a T.V. Magazine, where he interviewed stars appearing at the London Palladium and once visited the set of Coronation Street. In 1969 he became Editor of the Sevenoaks Chronicle, which became known as the campaigner's paper, through its help and involvement in local issues.

Bob told us many stories about his time spent as a reporter, which came to an end after the hurricane in 1987. In order to report on the devastation caused by the hurricane Bob went up in a plane from Biggin Hill with a photographer to record the damage and destruction to the county. Following publication of the article, the circulation of the paper went up from 13,000 to 60,000 copies in one week, and created interest in daily newspapers and TV. Bob decided to leave the newspaper to write a book on the hurricane, which proved to be a great success selling 265,000 copies. Bob has written many books and met many incredible people, which has led to a very interesting life which he shares with societies like ours through his talks.

SUGAR CRAFT

The classes started at the beginning of February and we have a range of abilities from complete beginners to experienced sugarcrafters. At the moment, we are a small group and we would welcome new members to join us. We meet on Wednesday evenings from 7.30pm - 9.30pm. Our

next session is Wednesday 2 March through to Wednesday 13 April and the cost is £10 per evening. Please phone 07711849031 or email chris.sugarworld@btinternet.com for further details.

BIG GARDEN BIRD WATCH, 30 JANUARY 2011

The weather has been very cold this winter. Would the numbers of birds coming to my garden during one hour have changed very much, I wondered? For the RSPB count I had to record the most number of each kind seen at any one time. They had to land in the garden, not just fly over.

Here are the figures, with last year's totals in brackets: Blackbird 5 (5), Chaffinch 2 (2), Collared Dove 3 (6), House Sparrow 6 (6) Robin 1 (1), Starling 18 (24), Song Thrush 1 (1), Crow 1 (1) and Greater Spotted Woodpecker 1 (0). The numbers are surprisingly similar, but no wagtail this time. More starlings than I saw in January often descend in a flock to feed, but this year there do seem to be fewer collared doves visiting the garden. The blackbirds are still chasing each other around, and today (March 16th) I saw two robins feeding together. Spring must be in the air! The results of the nationwide bird count will be announced in a few weeks' time. Claire Morgan

GRAND ANNUAL PLANT SALE

At the Church of St. John the Baptist, Tonbridge Road, Watlingbury, Saturday 30th April, 2011 – 10 am – 4 pm. Superb quality Nursery plants and home grown plant stall, plus St. John's craft stall, books, children's toys and games, raffle, home made cakes, cream teas and refreshments. Further information
01622 813032

LUNCHEES FOR LENT

A warm welcome awaits you at the Church on Wednesdays, 6th and 13th April 12.30 – 2.0 pm. Why not pop in for a chat over soup and bread or cheese, tomato and bread, with tea, coffee or squash. Cheese sandwiches and cake available for children

Everyone welcome, voluntary donations invited for charity.

Transport available if needed locally. Further information 01622 813032

WATERINGBURY WORKING MEN'S CLUB

Saturday 2 nd April – 8.00 pm	QUIZ NIGHT - £5 per person to include Buffet
Saturday, 9 th April – 8.00 pm	MAXINE – Well known vocalist
Saturday, 23 rd April	PIE AND MASH from 3.00 pm
St. George's Day	SEAFOOD in the evening
Bank Holiday Friday, 29 th April	POOL COMPETITION in
Opening at 1.00 pm	afternoon, BINGO in evening

Non Members welcome

MARCH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The planning committee would appreciate the opinions of parishioners in relation to planning applications prior to its meeting to help formulate the response to T & M. Please send comments to the Parish Clerk Redhill Cottage, Redhill or by e-mail Alternatively come along to the planning subcommittee meeting which is held directly after the monthly parish council meeting in the village hall on the first Tuesday of each month..

During the announcements at the start of the meeting William English gave details of the launch of the Friends of Watlingbury Church which takes place on Saturday 26 March at 9.30am in the Church. The Friends website will go live at 10am. The Mayor of Tonbridge and Malling and the Bishop of Rochester will both be attending the event. William hoped that many village residents will take the opportunity to attend. He explained that the Friends will raise money for capital projects to upkeep the village's ancient church building. It will not be involved in financially supporting the day-to-day activities of the church.

Nomination Papers – all existing councillors who wish to serve the parish in the coming term and those wishing to put their names forward for service, were reminded that their nomination papers must be returned to T & M Borough Council offices by noon on Monday 4 April. Watlington is allocated 9 councillors and at the present time there are 8. It is anticipated that there will be 4 vacancies to fill for the coming term. An election will only be triggered if there are more than 9 nominations.

Borough councillor's report – Francis English was unable to attend the meeting as it clashed with a T & M Borough meeting. She had sent a short written report which was read by the chairman. The T & M council tax will not be increased in the coming year, nor will services be cut. Full details can be found on the T & M website. No date had yet been fixed for the Drayhorse Meadow planning appeal; however it was hoped it would be held in April.

Planning applications The following were discussed at the planning sub-committee (the council's comments can be viewed at the T & M offices, Kingshill or on-line):

Extend car port and enclose south side with timber boarding – 6 Vine Court

Two storey side and rear extensions – 16 Leney Road

Listed Building Application for single storey rear extension and enclose attached carport to form lobby – 59 Bow Road

Convert garage into living space – 278 Red Hill

PCSO Dave Gilham reported that in February 4 crimes had been reported: an e-mail fraud, the theft of a battery from a boat at Bow Bridge Marine, a hubcap stolen from a vehicle parked in Phoenix Drive and a sat nav stolen from an insecure vehicle in Hanbury Close.

He also told the meeting that he had had a successful session at the school when the children had been thinking about traffic speed. Some children had accompanied the police in Bow Road when speeding motorists were stopped and spoken to by the police and the children. The children had worked on designing a Slow Down traffic sign. The winning design by Glen Dunn will be used on a sign to be put up close to the school.

It was reported that an enjoyable Quiz Night had been held in aid of the village hall and had raised over £600.

Councillors agreed to a request by Mrs Farrell to plant a tree at the cemetery in memory of her husband.

Maureen Allen reported on a meeting which councillors had had with Terry Drury in relation to traffic matters in the village.

Playing Fields It was agreed that the Council would write to British Rail to request a speedy erection of a rabbit-proof fence along the boundary of the Playing Fields with the rail embankment. Rabbits were a continuing source of damage to the surfaces of the fields. The work to prune and tidy trees and hedging had been carried out. It was hoped that residents would support the workforce weekend 8-10 April which included a Bash the Trash session at the fields on April 9 at 10am.

Dog Fouling At the public forum many residents and councillors expressed concerns at the poor state of pavements in the village caused by dog faeces. Most dog owners acted responsibly, but in recent times there appeared to be have been an increase in unsocial behaviour by dog owners who do not pick up after their pets. The Borough Dog Warden can help but in order to be successful needs details of offenders.

Elections The village hall will be used for elections on Thursday 5 May. On this date there will also be a national referendum on election reform. The Parish Council's May meeting will therefore be postponed until Tuesday 10 May. The April meeting will be on Tuesday 5 April. Both meetings will be

at 7.30pm in the village hall and residents are actively encouraged to attend and raise matters of local interest.

WATERINGBURY FLOWER CLUB
are holding a

TABLE TOP BOOT FAIR
NETTLESTEAD VILLAGE HALL
SUNDAY 10TH APRIL
10 AM – 1.0 PM
Admission 50p
Refreshments available
Tables £7.

To book a table please ring Jean 07762 610467

HISTORY SOCIETY

Our annual Wine and Cheese party will take place on 18th May at the Blackthorn Trust Garden Room, commencing 7.30. Ticket price £6 (no increase from last year) This is a Vegetarian venue, and I know the food will come up to its usual high standard.

This year's outing will be to Westernhanger Castle, The date will be Tuesday, 19th July, not 20th as shown in our programme. This is because the Castle only opens to the public on Tuesdays. Again no increase in ticket price - £21, which includes coach, tip for the driver, coffee on arrival and conducted tour of the house. Also open to non members.

Tickets can be obtained at the next meeting of the History Society or ring Janet 814974 or 817833.

WATERINGBURY BABY & TODDLER GROUP

We have all been very busy and had lots of fun this spring term. We celebrated Burns night by decorating Loch Ness Monsters and made beautiful Valentine's Day cards for our loved ones (but don't tell them as it's a secret!). We also made daffodils to celebrate St David's day and tucked into yummy pancakes during the week of Shrove Tuesday. And that's before we get to St Patrick's Day and Mother's day later this term when we have even more things planned!

If there are any parents/guardians wishing to join our friendly group, our sessions are held on Wednesday and Friday mornings from 10am to 12 noon at the Wateringbury Village Hall. There is a small charge of £2 for the first child and £1 each for subsequent children over 12 months old. Adults continue to be free. We also hire out our tables/chairs and toys for birthday parties etc in the hall. If you are interested please contact Tina on 07956 004363. THE COMMITTEE

WATERINGBURY SPEED WATCH DESPERATELY NEEDS MORE VOLUNTEERS

How do you persuade errant drivers to respect the speed restriction when racing through the village? Fixed and mobile cameras with their associated on-the-spot fines and other penalties have a role as does "restorative justice" which, among other things, may humiliate the offender when coming face-to-face with potential victims of their recklessness. Signage in the form of roundels and markings on road surfaces also play their part but evidence suggests drivers pay little heed to such reminders. Examples of traffic calming measures introduced in other areas would no doubt be effective in Wateringbury but are unlikely to be given serious consideration by the authorities in the short or medium term because of cost constraints.

Speeding in Wateringbury is endemic with particular problems on the two main arteries which carry large volumes of traffic. The roads and pavements are relatively narrow and there are few safe crossing points. Residents exiting their driveways and pedestrians on the footways or when attempting to cross the road are extremely vulnerable particularly at peak times. More needs to be done to make speeding drivers aware of the potential dangers they are generating for other road users,

pedestrians and not least to themselves. **Speed Watch** is designed to make a contribution to the overall objective of traffic calming to make Wateringbury safer than it might otherwise be.

The Speed Watch teams consist of three or more volunteers, at any one time, who record the registration numbers and other details of vehicles passing a fixed camera at speeds in excess of 36mph where a 30mph restriction is in place. The camera is positioned only at locations officially approved by West Kent Police. The information is posted on-line to the Police who in turn send warning letters to the registered owners of vehicles offending more than once in a twelve-month period and to first-offenders driving at excessive speeds. Some readers may already have received one of these letters as the Police have advised that some of the addressees have been local to Wateringbury although their identity is confidential to the Police. Hopefully drivers resident in the village will set a good example to others. There are no on-the-spot fines or other penalties involved directly as a result of the Speed Watch activity. The sole aim is to remind drivers that they must slow down and comply with the Speed restrictions in place.

Wateringbury Speed Watch has been operating for nearly three years. Evidence suggests that it has been effective particularly among local drivers and those who regularly pass through the village, supported by positive feedback and encouragement from the police:

"Keep up the good work. You guys seem to be flying the speed watch flag for West Kent at the moment, nobody else is sending in returns. We appreciate your dedication." Received from the West Kent roads policing officer recently.

The present small team of volunteers does an excellent job on behalf of all residents and visitors to the village. A larger team would facilitate a more regular appearance with the camera and thereby improve effectiveness. The village needs more volunteers. If you are interested in devoting an hour or so (shifts are normally of one hour duration and at peak traffic times; ie morning and afternoon) to this worthy cause or would just like more information we would very much like to hear from you.

Contact: Charles Stroud Speed Watch Co-ordinator Tel: 01622 815395

WATERINGBURY WEATHER WATCH

February had a bit of everything as far as weather is concerned, except for snow. It was much warmer than usual with slightly less rainfall than average.

March so far has been exceptionally dry with only 2.54 mm (0.10") of rainfall in the first 17 days. The temperatures have been up on last year so far but although we have seen mostly high pressure systems, from 9th March – 18th, the barometer has not managed to climb above 1,000 mb (29.5") I make no prediction for the summer but can definitely say that spring has sprung.

WATERINGBURY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Our Social Afternoon was a great success, with all members bringing flower arrangement and craft items for judging for the Flower and Hickman cups respectively. The imagination and creativity demonstrated by our members was quite remarkable. The Hickman Cup was won by Lillie Hollett and the Flower Cup by Kathy Coates.

We have welcomed four more new members to our branch this month.

At our meeting on 14 April the speaker will be Mr Norman Evans on the subject "More Fun with Maths". Kathy Coates

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Once again grateful thanks for your continued support, this year's Box Collection was £420.62; also thanks to those in the village who have been added to the list ready for next year's collection in February. With appreciation, Maria White

DONKEY APPEAL

Wanted a docile donkey to lead our Palm Sunday Procession through Wateringbury Village on 17th April. CAN YOU HELP? Jemima led the procession for many years but has now gone to donkey heaven and we are looking for a successor. Can you, or somebody you know, help solve our dilemma? The church wardens at St. John the Baptist Church have searched high and low without success. If you can come to their aid please telephone Patricia Berry on 01622 814776 or Eddie Scarlin on

01622 812148

MAIDSTONE MENCAP NEEDS YOU!

Volunteers urgently needed. Can you drive a mini-bus? (couple of hours a week) Interested in joining a fundraising team? Fancy a couple of hours manning a stall - jumble sale. Summer Fayre etc? For more information please contact Margaret Leeds 07903 196333

PUBS OF WATERINGBURY The Phoenix, Red Hill

This is a lovely weather-boarded building which dates back to the late 1600s. For most of its life it was a beer house since it had no bar as such; the beer being served from the kitchen. In 1947 it was granted a wine licence. The pub took its name from the Phoenix Brewery (Bow Road – now Phoenix Drive housing complex) which operated in the village from 1843 until 1982. Augustus Leney, the brewer, bought the beer house, 6 adjacent cottages, stables, oast and 2 acres in 1886. One long-serving landlord was George Hodges who was at the Phoenix from 1912 until at least 1945. The Phoenix was de-licensed in 1957 and sold as a home. The original purchasers have lived there ever since. (*Taken from Whitbread the Inn behind the Signs by David Harper*)

TESTON & WATERINGBURY NURSERY GROUP (Registered charity 1044257)

www.testonandwateringburynursery.co.uk

Admissions and all enquiries: Amanda Vidler 07805 796353

We've had another very busy month and April looks set to be the same. Whilst continuing our flower theme, we've made flower shaped pancakes for Shrove Tuesday, which were absolutely delicious...so I'm told. The children have had their photos taken to make some bespoke Easter cards for their loved ones and took part in Red Nose Day by donating £1 each and dressing up in red. We've celebrated the Hindu festival of Holi by making a 'Holi tree' of hand prints from the children and their families, and a trip to our local fire station proved very popular, especially with mums...! We joined forces with Wateringbury School for another extremely entertaining quiz & curry night so a big thank you to all those who helped and attended, and especially to Wateringbury School PTA.

We start April with our Mothering Sunday activity (on a Friday!) and are celebrating Easter with a Fun Day on Wednesday 13th April, so keep your diaries clear. We'll have many stalls including biscuit decorating and the usual, but always popular, cake stall and raffle; we're also having an Easter Bunny Hunt, so get those binoculars out. We'll be starting at 10.00am - see you there!

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: SATURDAY 22ND OCTOBER 2011. Although it is early days yet, you might want to put the following into your diary. There is a great Charity Choral Concert arranged at St. Peters, Pembury to benefit a local charity for adults with learning disabilities, **Pepenbury**, on 22nd October. Thanks - The Friends of Peppenbury

FRIENDS OF WATERINGBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL (FOWPS)
Registered charity 1038836

Spring has certainly sprung for the Friends of Wateringbury Primary School. The season kicked off with a working weekend (Operation Ground Force) to clear the school's wildlife area and tackle other jobs in the playground. The event was preceded by a Quiz and Curry Night on 25 March. Two school discos are planned for 1 April to mark the end of Fun, Fitness and Friendship Week and we'll also be opening our special Mother's Day Shop in the same week.

The next Friends' Committee meeting takes place on Monday 4 April at 7.30pm (Wateringbury Hotel) when we'll be progressing plans for the summer fête on 18 June. **NB. We still urgently need a local business to become our Grand Draw sponsor.**

E-mail chairman@fowps.org.uk if you'd like to see your name on hundreds of tickets, in our newsletters and on our new website at www.fowps.org.uk Looking ahead to Term 5 we'll be celebrating the royal wedding with a red, white and blue non-uniform day on the second day back (28 April). Gail Isted Chairman Tel 01622 813716

FLOWER CLUB

This month saw our first National demonstrator of the year – Patricia Dibbin. Pat arrived with her helper, and rapidly set to work with a series of Spring designs to delight and enthral us - in the break there was a sudden rush for extra raffle tickets in the hope that someone would win one - a bargain for a pound! Pat held the audience in raptures with her funny stories and tales of her travels all over the world flower arranging. Pat is also the area coordinator for Judges and Speakers and Demonstrators in Oxford and Bucks. I can honestly say it was a wonderful evening. If anyone was lucky enough to be at our local JDSE day at Ditton earlier today they were treated to a wonderful day of speakers on photography and flower arranging.

It's World Flower Day on the 6th May and Wateringbury has been delighted to be accepted to put on a display of flowers at County Hall - we are looking forward to it.

Next meeting is on Thursday 21st April – Speaker Graham Harmer with his title "From my Collection, and Club Competition "April Showers" We look forward to welcoming you. Jean Schofield WFC

NETTLESTEAD AND WATERINGBURY PRE-SCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOL CLUBS (Charity No.1062792)

It hardly seems possible that we are half way through this Term, so many things have been done already! For a start we are now well into our After School Clubs much to everyone's enjoyment. It is a brilliant time for the children (and adults) to let off steam and chill by exploring in the park and woods, dancing to music with scarves and lots of craft activities.

The children have very definite ideas about what they like to eat in the afternoons and we have had requests from curry to beans on toast! The curry they made was delicious with one child going back for thirds! Probably the best recommendation for our service was when 2 children asked when are you going to do a sleepover!

We are trying to brighten up the dull days by planting bulbs and seeds - it will be exciting to see how many different types of flowers manage to grow. One of our intrepid gardeners has just dug up some potatoes – mash for tea!

We have a couple of visits coming up before the end of Term. One is the Discovery Bus and the other is to the allotment. The walk up to the allotment is just delightful through the fields and past the mill pond with the swans and ducks. We are all very lucky that we live in such a beautiful part of the world.

Lastly we have had the annual photographs taken and what a charming and good looking group of children we have living in our villages.

If you would like to become a part of our exciting and ever changing provision please feel free to come and visit at anytime OR you can ring for more information on 01622 813120 or if no one is there to take your call try 07908 612887. Please visit our website at www.wateringburyandnettlesteadpreschool.org.uk OR email us at nettlesteadandwateringbury@yahoo.com

DON'T FORGET WE ALSO OFFER BREAKFAST CLUBS, WALKING BUS & AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS.

THE FOOTPATH GROUP

There is no walk arranged for April, but on Sunday, 8th May the “Bluebell Walk” will take place, starting from Wateringbury Village Hall at 2.30 sharp, a walk of about 3½ miles through local woodland. Anyone welcome, we are a friendly unofficial group who just like to walk, we do not have anyone to lead walks regularly and would welcome volunteers willing to undertake this task for us occasionally. For more information please call 01622 812338

QUIET HOUR WEDNESDAY 13 APRIL – 8-9PM

A chance to go along to the church at any time in the hour for quiet prayer and contemplation or to light a votive candle.

SERVICES OF HEALING AND WHOLENESS.

The next services will be at 8pm on **Tuesday 5 April** a praise service in Teston and on **Tuesday 3 May** a communion service in Wateringbury.

CHURCH THANKS

A huge thank you to Duncan Atkinson who gave a brilliant organ recital on 19 February and to all who helped and supported the event which raised £579 before expenses for church funds.

BENEFICE MOTHERS' UNION

On Thursday 7 April the Union will be holding a Quiet Day at Malling Abbey and on Thursday 5 May a visit to the Blackthorne Trust in Barming has been arranged. Non members are always welcome to these events, for full details please phone the secretary on 01622 814305

EAST MALLING SINGERS CONCERT

The next concert by the singers will be in East Malling Church at 7.30pm on Saturday 9 April. Among the works will be by Schutz – The Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross, Allegri – Miserere plus other instrumental works. Tickets £8m concessions £6, children free from 01622 750943

You are invited to

MUSIC FOR A SPRING EVENING
A CONCERT BY KENT CHAMBER CHOIR – conductor Alan Vincent
on SATURDAY 21 MAY at 7.30pm in Watringbury Church

Tickets £10 (£5 for children and students) to include programme and interval nibbles. Wine not included but available for a donation.

The choir is well-known for its fine performances
and will sing music to please all tastes.
They will be joined by gifted young tenor soloist William Morgan
and organist Geoffrey Lester.

THOUGHTS FROM THE VICARAGE

2 The Grange, East Malling ME19 6AH

e-mail jamesbrown2@tinyworld.co.uk Benefice office ☎ 01732 843282

THIS EASTER IS ABOUT FREEDOM

Our television is full of the most horrific scenes of demonstrators being met by violence and massacre on the part of the various security forces in the affected countries of North Africa and the Middle East. As I write the Libyans are expecting some kind of major response from Col Gaddafi and they are appealing for help from the West. I do not know, I don't believe anyone knows, what will develop in that region in the long term. I simply pray for peaceful settlements to dominate the news very soon.

It is true to say that this region has a history of war, violence and civil unrest. I can't help but refer to our Easter story. We ought not think of the Easter story as just being a pretty bible story with a happy ending. It is far from pretty and, whilst there was great news in the end, it involved some awful scenes that can be related to that which we have recently witnessed in that same region today. The scene was Jerusalem and the streets were full of fear, anxiety and potential for serious violence. Jesus was at the very centre of all that was to take place, he was the agitator and the authorities needed to dispose of him and to maintain peace on the streets at a time when the city was full of visitors for the feast of Passover. It was seen by the ruling authorities, the Romans, as expedient to rid themselves of this subversive character before the feast had begun at the start of the Sabbath. Good Friday does not just mark an important religious event for Christians but but at the time it was a time of political manoeuvring on the part of both the Roman and the Jewish Authorities. There is little doubt that times have hardly changed in many ways!

The word on the lips of the crowds in market squares of Jerusalem 2,000 ago was "Freedom". They believed that Jesus was to release them from the oppression of the ruling years of authority, like a military leader. Instead he brought Peace and Love, including the love we should have for our enemies. Today the same word, "Freedom", inspires unarmed crowds to lay down their lives in the face of batons, bullets and tanks. There is only one rule of law that can save these nations and offer them the "Freedom" they seek and that is God's rule of Love. The Easter message this year will resonate perhaps more powerfully than usual as we are all reminded that through God's sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ, on the cross we can always be "Free" and able to offer Love.

Let us hope and pray that North Africa and the Middle East will discover this good news very soon!

Happy Easter and enjoy your "Freedom". Revd Jim Brown

APCM ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

This year the annual meeting will be held in the church on **Tuesday 12 April at 8pm**. Everyone is welcome to this annual review of the church's activities and the election of officers. In the interests of ecology this year the annual reports of all the church's activities is available to view or download from the church's new website www.watringburychurch.org.uk. If you would like to order a hard copy of the reports there is a notice at the back of the church or contact the benefice office on 01732 843282

FUN WITH FAITH

For its April meeting the club will be joining with the church Easter project on Saturday 23 April. It will be back in the village hall for its May meeting on Saturday 21 May between 11.30am and 1.30pm. All primary age children most welcome. Phone 01622 817098 for more details.

EASTER PROJECT – SATURDAY 23 APRIL

Children aged 5 – 11 (or younger if they are in Reception Class) are invited to Wateringbury Church from 9.30am to 12.30pm for a morning of fun, crafts and faith based on the story of the first Easter. To register and/or more details please phone 01622 814793.

CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD SPRING CLEAN – 9 April

Volunteers are needed to help spruce up the church and churchyard in preparation for Easter. There are a variety of tasks, dusting, polishing, pruning, general tidying, etc; so take your pick and bring along appropriate tools. Tea and coffee provided. Go along at any time between 9.30am and noon your help will be much appreciated. Please note this a week earlier than usual.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funeral	16 March	Maureen C (Mo) Neate
Baptisms	20 March	Sophie Grace Trowell Noah Walter Gabriel Glasscote

BENEFICE CHURCH SERVICES – APRIL 2011

Mothers' Sunday 3 April 8am Holy Communion – Teston 9.45am Family Service – East Malling 9.45am Family Service - Teston 10am Service for Mothers' Sunday – Wateringbury	Sunday 10 April 8am Holy Communion – East Malling 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling 10am Holy Communion - Wateringbury 6.30pm Evening Prayer - Teston
Palm Sunday 17 April 8am Holy Communion – Wateringbury 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling 10 am Family Service – Wateringbury 6.30pm Eucharist - Teston	Easter Sunday 24 April 8am Holy Communion – East Malling 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling 10am Holy Communion – Wateringbury 6.30pm Eucharist - Teston
Every Monday – 2-3pm – Scout & Guide HQ, Glebe Meadow – Toddler Praise	
Tuesdays (not 1 st in month) – 7.30pm in Wateringbury Church – Holy Communion	
Every Thursday - At noon during Lent in East Malling Church – Holy Communion	

Special Services

Mothers' Sunday 3 April – a special family service with Rev Alan Searle will be held at 10am. As is our custom the ladies in the congregation will be given a posy of flowers beautifully made by Rosemary Skinner of Bijou Nursery. A chance for young and old to remember and give thanks for the mother-figures in their lives.

Palm Sunday 17 April.

As is our custom we will meet in the village car park to set off at 9.30am for a parade to church for the 10am Service. We hope to be led by a donkey – the hunt is still on to find one - but donkey or not the parade will go ahead.

6pm in East Malling Church A Lenten Cantata – music by G F Handel

Holy Week 25 – 29 April

'No Ordinary Man' a series of illustrated meditations. There will be a different presentation each evening at 8pm – Monday at Teston, Tuesday in East Malling and Wednesday in Wateringbury
Mundy Thursday at 8pm in East Malling – Holy Communion followed by Feet Washing and Vigil 'til midnight.

Good Friday

2pm Devotions in Wateringbury Church led by Alan Searle

2pm Solemn Liturgy in East Malling Church

8pm At the Foot of the Cross, words and music - Teston