

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO ALL OUR READERS, ADVERTISERS,
CONTRIBUTORS AND DISTRIBUTORS**

VILLAGE DIARY

December

- 1 Christingle Service – Church - 10am
- 1 Footpaths Local Walk – Village Hall car park - 2pm
- 3 Parish Council –Village Hall – 7.30pm
- 3 WI District Carol Service – Church – 7.30pm
- 7 Kent Chamber Choir Concert – Church – 7.30pm
- 16 School Carol Service – Church – 6pm
- 18 Coffee Break – Church – 10.30-12.30
- 18 History Society Social Evening – A talk by Pat Mortlock A Country Christmas followed by carols – Village Hall – 7.30pm
- 19 9 Lessons and Carols by Candlelight – Church - 8pm
- 24 Crib Service - 5pm - Midnight Communion – 11.30pm - Church
- 25 Family Communion – Church – 10.30am

January

- 1 Footpaths Group New Year's Day Walk – V Hall car park – 2pm
- 7 Parish Council –Village Hall – 7.30pm
- 15 The War Underground – History Society talk – V Hall – 7.40pm
- 16 Flower Club Demonstration – Nettlestead Hall – 7.30pm
- 22 Coffee Break - Church - 10.30-12.30
- 24/25 Wateringbury Players Panto – Village Hall
- 30 10 week Cricket Umpire Course starts at Village Hall – 7.30pm

Wateringbury Players Proudly Present The Pantomime

RAPUNZEL

In Wateringbury Village Hall

Friday 24 January 7.30pm doors open 7pm **All tickets £8**

Saturday 25 January

Matinee 2pm doors open 1.30pm **Children £5* Adults £8**

Evening 7.30pm doors open 7pm **all tickets £10**

*Tickets will be on sale from Wednesday 18 December at
The Post Office and The Handy Stores.*

**(Note: child concessions available on Saturday Matinee performance only)*

BULKY REFUSE CONTAINER will be in Fields Lane between 11am and noon on **Saturdays 7 and 21 December and 11 and 18 January.**

GREETINGS

The Parish Council wish all residents a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope to see you at some of our monthly meetings in 2014 as we really do value local opinions and we would be delighted to have more volunteers to serve as Councillors. **Michael Cayzer – Chairman**

We wish all readers the Joy of Christmas and a Peaceful and Happy New Year. We are most appreciative of all the prayers, cards and messages of support received during Jim's illness. **Rev Jim and Jean Brown**

We wish all readers a Joyful and Peaceful Christmas and every Blessing for a Happy and Healthy New Year. We thank everyone who has supported your parish church, St John the Baptist, in so many ways during the last year; prayerfully, thoughtfully and practically, your assistance is greatly appreciated. **Rev Alan Searle, and Churchwardens Eddie Scarlin and Joanna Fyson**

Christmas Greetings from the committee of **Wateringbury Club**. New members are always welcome, why not Resolve to give the club a try in the New Year. Details, including coming events, available during opening hours from 01622 812167.

VILLAGE PEOPLE *Please let us have your news and tributes for the February magazine by 17 January*

Congratulations to Cathy and Brian Miller on the birth of their first grandchild **Miles James** who weighed in at 7lb 6oz, on 18 October in Pembury Hospital. Well done too to proud parents **Katie and James Boswell**.

Belated 50th Birthday congratulations to **Charles Mackenzie** who celebrated last month.

Best Wishes to Dr David Forsythe who retired on 29 October. David has been one of our village GPs for many years. He first came to the village with his young family to join Dr Milne. David subsequently left the partnership and after many temporary homes and many years of searching he found a site and was the driving force in building the splendid medical centre which we enjoy today at 14 Pelican Court.

Welcome to Dr Victoria Flanagan who will be joining Dr Edward Gaule, Dr Julie Whitehead and Dr Katie Collier on 2 December. Suzanne Large is now the practice manager replacing **Michael Byrne** who is also wished a long and happy retirement.

Rodney Thornton It is with great sadness we report the death of Rodney Thornton on 11 October 2013, following a difficult year with illness. Rodney was a local, familiar and trusted plumber, who responded cheerfully to the inevitable panic call outs and was a long term advertiser in the Rostrum and other local Village magazines. Prior to starting his plumbing business he had worked in Wateringbury at AMG.

Rodney was involved with many community clubs and pastimes. He had been a Member of the Wateringbury & Teston Small Bore Rifle Club, The Rye Water Ski Club and was a very active member of Teston Club. Since retiring he had taken up golf and in the recent past had assisted with the Stage Lighting for The Wateringbury Players. Our sincerest condolences go to his wife Sue and children Christopher and Sandra. He will be missed by all who knew him.

John Benjamin was born in Burham and spent much of his life working and living in the Medway Towns. He moved to The Brucks when he retired in 1983 and enjoyed his retirement with his wife Betty. He was a quiet gentleman who loved travelling, gardening and his family.

Freda Gwendoline Robbins Freda was a long time resident of the village and sadly passed away on 30 October. A Salisbury lass, Freda was a nurse working in Bath when, in 1944, one of her patients was a young soldier who had sustained shrapnel in his leg, (he wore a caliper for the rest of his life). Love blossomed and in June 1947

she and Doug were married and came to live in his family home in Bow Road. She took an active part in village life; with Cath (Bennett) Perryman she restarted the Brownies and they ran the pack until the arrival of Freda's first son, Mark. She also helped organise the Seniors Club. An enthusiastic member of the W.I. Freda served for many years as Treasurer, and then as President. She was famed for the delicious cakes she baked for the enjoyment of members at the monthly meetings. She broke her hip after a fall, and then the other hip and an elbow, and over the past year life was not easy for her. Freda was aged 91, and will be sorely missed by her family and friends (29 May 1922 - 30 October 2013)

JOHN CULLINGWORTH – A TRIBUTE

John was my predecessor when I arrived at Wateringbury C.E. Primary School in September of 1982. At that time John had gained promotion to a larger Deputy Headship in the Maidstone area. Our school was not doing very well, and many people were very sad at his going. Once in the job, I quickly realized that John was a very difficult act to follow. He had charisma, style and a measure of unique eccentricity necessary when leading a school. On top of this he was a brilliant musician, writing musicals for the school and developing those artistic skills in his pupils.

He was very helpful to me personally as I settled into the school, and for the rest of our teaching careers our paths ran parallel and often crossed. John was a keen cricketer, and in those early eighties he and others like Mike Witts and Godfrey Featherstone tried to start a Wateringbury Cricket Club. I was roped in, but those early games coincided with a very wet summer, and it just didn't work out at that time. I do remember John, wicket keeping, waving his gloved arms, his "basso profundo" voice commanding those in the outfield to return the ball quickly, not exactly using those words!

When Miss Thompson retired from the School in 1988, the post of Headteacher was vacant. John and I both applied; we were both "short-listed", and we were both given an interview. We were both amused by the problem this gave Mrs. Blest, the then Chair of Governors, and our Vicar, the Reverend Donald Bish. The interview process lasted for three days, and we were friends before, during and after the whole process. John soon gained his own Headship at Wouldham All Saints C.E. School, which was a just reward for all his talents. Knowing my love of History, John invited me to attend his School's Trafalgar celebrations each year. His welcome was always the same – he was busy, but not too busy, and would always give me a job to do as he buzzed around setting up and organising the Day.

John was always on the go; full of plans; he always had things to do. He had vision and the energy to put things in motion. Sometimes frustrated by circumstance, he never let it get him down for too long. He was generous and encouraging to me as a colleague, and was always keenly interested in Wateringbury, not just the School but the whole community. To John, Wateringbury was a special place of which he always spoke fondly. His former pupils and their parents always spoke, and speak, with fondness of John. He will be missed, of course, but more importantly, John Cullingworth will be affectionately remembered. Richard Arnold

THE WATERINGBURY PLAYERS

Many thanks to all those who supported us this year by coming along to see our productions: A Dickensian Evening at Christmas, Cinderella and The Wind in the Willows. As a result of your support we are delighted that this year we have been able to make donations totalling £2,300 to the following:
Slideaway: £500 - ME: £500 - Wateringbury CE Primary School: £500 – St John the Baptist Church: £800.

We are now looking forward to our Pantomime which this year will be **RAPUNZEL**. Performances will take place on **Friday 24 and Saturday 25 January, 2014** at Wateringbury Village Hall. We look forward to seeing you there. Celia Pocock email: wateringburyplayers@hotmail.co.uk

NOVEMBER 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. Alternatively come along to the planning subcommittee meeting which follows the monthly general meeting

Allotments Councillors will shortly be carrying out an inspection of the plots to ensure all plots are being worked efficiently and maintained to the appropriate standard. There are 3 people on the waiting list.

Cemetery The recent high winds had damaged a fir tree. A special area for Children's graves and ashes is to be considered and a site meeting will be held.

October Crime figures The chairman read out the Police Monthly Update. The crimes of note were 1 burglary of scrap items stolen from a garden shed, 1 criminal damage when a fence was broken, 1 theft from a motor vehicle in Cobbs Close when tools were taken from an unsecure vehicle, 1 drug offence on Tonbridge Road when a formal warning was given. There are ongoing investigations relating to 1 robbery when a male stole money from the till at the service station. Two incidents of anti-social behaviour occurred - guests were removed from the premises of a local pub and fly tipping in Park Road. PCSO Philip Harrison has moved to a new area and PCSO Lia Bishop will be looking after the village area over the coming months as well as East Malling.

Rail Partnership Councillor Chris Talbert reported on a recent meeting of the Kent Community Rail Partnership he had attended. Some stations on the Medway Valley line will require to be modified to meet the requirements for Disabled Access by 2020.

Signal Box Councillor David Marks agreed to contact British Rail on the Council's behalf to find out what the plans were for the box when the automatic level crossing barriers are installed.

Sports and Recreation Association Councillors arranged to meet at the play area to help spread the safety chippings which were to be delivered in the near future. Mike Witts reported that when he had been working at the fields he had been approached on several occasions by parents requesting that the play area be fenced to keep dogs away from children and equipment. Councillors agreed to investigate the proposal.

Speedwatch In October 139 vehicles (the same number as last month) were observed travelling at excess speed through the village, for some offenders this was the second or third time they had been logged.

Planning The planning committee met at the close of the general meeting. They supported the General Council's application for change of use to utilise 1000 sq metres of land previously used for grazing for provision of an overflow car park to adjacent sports pavilion existing car park at Drayhorse Meadow: and had no objections to plans to convert garage into study and utility area, replacing door with brickwork and window at 22 Waterside Mews.

The next meetings of the Parish Council will be on **Tuesdays 3 December and 7 January at 7.30pm** in the village hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend the meetings.

A DAY OUT WITH THE WATERINGBURY BELLRINGERS

The day dawned bright and sunny, perfect for our annual outing. This is a chance for us to visit other towers and experience ringing on unfamiliar bells. Ex-Wateringbury ringers travelled from the Isle of Wight and West Sussex to join us for the day. We had a very enjoyable day visiting a total of five churches, starting at Sundridge (6), moving on to Brasted (8), Downe (6), Hayes (6) and finishing at Chelsfield (8). At Wateringbury we only have 6 bells but Brasted and Chelsfield which are 8-bell towers were a challenge for us to ring because of the extra bells. The anti-clockwise ring at Brasted proved additionally problematic for some of us as the temptation was to face the wrong direction when ringing commenced. During the day the ringing ranged from call changes and plain hunt to the more complicated methods of Grandsire Doubles, Plain Bob Minor, and London Surprise Minor. Lunch was in the Queens Head in Downe which fortified us for the afternoon's ringing at Hayes and Chelsfield. Some of us ended the day with a meal at the Scared Crow in West Malling and an opportunity to discuss the day's ringing. Thank you to Dave and Fran for organising the day (including the fair weather). Our plan is to visit towers in London for next year's outing.

We desperately need more ringers at Wateringbury. Beginners and lapsed experienced ringers are all welcome. If you are interested please give us a call on 01622 812262.

TESTON AND WATERINGBURY NURSERY GROUP

Term 2 certainly started with a Bang, (and not just because our children were celebrating the firework season!), but also because we were the proud recipients of the Kent Quality Mark Award which was presented at an Awards Ceremony on 7 November. This Award recognises that the Nursery continuously reflects on everything it does, and ensures that the quality of the service remains consistently high.

With our superhero and princess themed term concluding, our staff, children and parents will be busy little elves preparing for one of the most exciting times of the year. This will include making Christmas decorations with pine cones and clay, decorating our Christmas tree and Grotto, and then visiting Teston Church to listen to Christmas stories. The Term will conclude, as always, with the children's Christmas concert on 20 December including a special appearance from someone in a big red suit!

The New Year will then see the children learning all about pets and pet care which will include a visit from a Qualified Veterinary Nurse.

Seasons Greetings and Best Wishes for 2014 from everyone at the nursery! If you would like to find out more about our Nursery Group please visit us at www.testonandwateringburynursery.co.uk

GRAVESHAM CHORAL SOCIETY'S CHRISTMAS CONCERTS at St George's Church, Gravesend, will take place on **Wednesday 18 and Thursday 19 December at 8.00pm**. Tickets are £8 (£5 for students children under 5 free) To avoid disappointment book tickets soon from ☎ 01474 816684.or www.graveshamcs.co.uk

WATERINGBURY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE - The WI - Inspiring Women

Did you know that an enthusiastic police sniffer dog nearly destroyed Kent flower arrangers' entry in last year's Chelsea Flower Show? We learnt about 'The Road to Chelsea' from our excellent speaker Susan Shaw who was one of the team of nine flower arrangers selected from Kent branches of NAFAS, the National Association of Flower Arranging Societies to create the NAFAS entry at Chelsea last year. The team were successful in gaining a silver gilt medal. Susan recounted the development of the colossal arrangement and many anecdotes from along the way.

The Club is hosting the WI District Carol Service at 7.30pm on Tuesday 3 December. This event comes to Wateringbury only once in seven years, and we are expecting around 100 WI local members to attend. Our new Choir will be leading the singing. We're also looking forward to our members only Christmas party, always one of the highlights of our year.

Our choir, gentle walk, social and scrabble afternoon and lunch meetings will take place as usual. We're a friendly group who meet in Wateringbury Village Hall at 2.30pm on the second Thursday of each month. Our next open Club meeting will be on **Thursday 9 January**, when visitors will be very welcome. For enquiries please call 01622 812018 Best wishes for a very Happy Christmas and successful New Year to all readers from the WI.

HISTORY SOCIETY

In December we will be holding our Social Evening during which Pat Mortlock will be telling us about "A Country Christmas" which will be followed by Carols sung by the Church Choir. On **15 January** Tim Tawney will be coming along to tell us about "The War Underground".

In October our speaker was Bob Appleton whose talk was entitled "Round Britain by Tram". His talk showed the development of tramways in Britain from over 100 years ago as illustrated on old picture postcards of the period. New electric tramways and the picture postcard craze coincided in the early years of the 20th century and we were

transported back to that time with Bob's slides and then on to the present day. We were shown how the trams differed between counties and up and down the country from Scotland to Cornwall. Initially horse-drawn, even powered by steam complete with a boiler room and a stoker for the fire, and also by electricity. Several members of the audience could remember travelling in trams and Bob mentioned that trams were still running in Manchester, Blackpool and on the Isle of Man, as well as abroad. When the tramlines were taken up, some were replaced with trolley buses run on overhead electric lines, and many of us could remember them running from Barming through Maidstone and on to Loose. We experienced another trip down memory lane with Bob's talk.

CRICKET UMPIRING COURSE

A Cricket Umpiring Course will be held at Wateringbury Village Hall this coming winter. It will start on **Thursday 30 January 2014** and run for ten consecutive weeks. Each evening will begin at 7.30pm and last for about 2 hours. Registration for the course and further details can be found on the Kent Cricket Board website – www.kentcricketboard.co.uk. Alternately ring me on 01622 813674 or email dennisstones@hotmail.com for information. Dennis Stones

BABY AND TODDLER GROUP

We are a friendly group of people. We meet in the Village Hall **every Wednesday and Friday morning 10am to 12 noon**; there are lots of toys to play with. We also have a craft and singing session. The cost is £2 for the first child, then £1 for any other children, this includes tea, coffee and children's snacks. Our last meeting for this year is Wednesday 18 December which is our Christmas Party (ticket only). We begin the New Year on **Wednesday 8 January**. So if you are interested come along and join us. For more information call Linda on 01732 522 437.

FLOWER CLUB

We end our year with the members' Christmas dinner served to us in Nettlestead village hall. On **16 January** our evening is called **Committee Capers** where members of the committee host the demonstration. Our AGM will be in February, when I step down after 3 years as Chairman and Susan Gransden will take over, I wish her all the best.

A very well done to all members who entered the NAFAS Kent Area Show at Detling Show Ground in mid November. In the Club Class Chris Jenkins and Adele Stewart-Lord gained a Commended; in the class 'All Wrapped Up', Iris Shaw was awarded Second and Anne Davies a Commended. Freddie Shaw won 2nd in the Novice class, Iris and Freddie also won Commended in other classes.

On another note I am honoured to have been asked to become Kent Area Vice Chairman elect and will take up the role in November 2014 which is a great privilege. If you wish to come along to any of our club meetings as a visitor, you will be more than welcome, we are a friendly bunch and our motto is Friendship through Flowers. We meet on the third Thursday of each month at 7.30pm in Nettlestead Hall. Jean Schofield Chairman

BLACKTHORN TRUST CHRISTMAS FAIR - 7 DECEMBER £1 entry for adults, children free, open 10.30am to 2.30pm St Andrews Road, Barming

NEWS OF CHRISTMAS PREPARATIONS AND MORE AT WATERINGBURY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Remembrance Day was marked in school this year with a service on Monday, 11 November, conducted entirely by our Year 6 children. The class has been studying World War I this term – the events, the literature and the art that came out of those traumatic years – with Year 6 teacher, Mrs Sarah Jones. The pupils planned and prepared the Remembrance Day Service, drawing on what they'd learned. An atmosphere of deep respect and reverence was created by the children as they took us through the tragic events and poignant poetry of the time, and reminded us of the important work of the Royal British Legion on behalf of our Service men and women.

Remembrance week concluded on Friday with a fundraising effort to remember a different group of people and need. Children in Need highlights for our pupils how important it is to remember those who are less fortunate and need our support, compassion and kindnesses. The children came to school dressed in pyjamas and presented a spectacular sight of nightwear colour and winter warmth! From the latest fashionable onesies on our youngest pupils to staff in dressing gowns, everyone participated. The day concluded with cosy storytime activities in each classroom.

Preparations are underway for our annual Christmas performances. Reception Class will present a nativity, as will our combined Year 1/2 classes. Year 3 and Years 4/5 are keeping their productions top secret for now but judging from the quality of last year's performances, we're in for a treat.

The **school's Carol Service** will be held at St John the Baptist at 6:00pm on **Monday, 16 December**. Do join us for what promises to be a special evening of traditional carols, readings and prayers. As our thoughts turn towards Christmas, may we all remember our many blessings and share a sense of joy in the season.

We will return to school on **Monday 6 January 2014**.

Mrs Chasey Crawford-Usher, Acting Headteacher www.wateringbury.kent.sch.uk

WEST KENT WHEELS 2 WORK

Want the loan of a moped for up to a year to help you get to work, education or training? This moped loan scheme includes rider training, a helmet, padded reflective jacket and gloves. Endorsed by Kent Fire & Rescue Service and funded by KCC. For more details and an application form email rtp@tandridge.gov.uk or or telephone 01883 732791

LAMENT FOR A LOST ORCHARD

There is an orchard that lies between Old Road and Gibbs Hill that has not been cultivated for 6 years. At first I felt a sad to see the trees neglected, but after a while I began to see the space as an amazing nature reserve. Green woodpeckers are plentiful, rooting for insects; a pair of kestrels nest in the trees hunting mice and voles over the orchards. Buzzards have moved in to the area and on sunny days they ride the thermals and their high pitched mew can be heard for miles.

In spring the trees still produce a show of blossom and in early summer the red and black cinnabar moths arrive and lay their eggs on the ragwort. The stripy caterpillars devour the plants and grow fat. The ragwort has almost disappeared as the caterpillars have increased in number.

As summer progresses there is a tapestry of colours on the field below the orchard made up of thistles and different species of grass in flower. Butterflies, bees and hover flies enjoy the nectar and pollen. On sunny Autumn days olive grass snakes bask in the warmth. A family of weasels lives among the rocks. As autumn turns to winter the orchard is filled with the chatter of field fares who rely on the fruit to see them through the cold period. This summer I found a small number of the truly astonishing bee orchid. The flower mimics both the appearance and smell of a female bee and attracts male bees to achieve pollination.

In the past few days the entire space has changed. The trees have been ripped out, still laden with fruit that lies smashed and pressed in to the mud. I understand the increasing need for the land to provide food. However, I truly regret the loss of the habitat and I wonder if we will all, in the end, regret the loss of biodiversity. Nicola Wignall

FOOTPATHS GROUP WALKS

Our November walk attracted 22 villagers for the walk out to Danns Lane to see where the landowner wishes to divert the footpath. At the point where the diversion would start Councillor Chris Talbert gave us an update on the proposed diversion, it was agreed the original plan was unacceptable as it was too far off the definitive footpath, but an alternative put forward by the council would be agreeable.

Sunday 2 December. Meet at the Hall car park at 2pm for a 3½ mile walk to Pizien Well via Mill Pond and Rock Farm, may be muddy in places.

Wednesday 1 January 2014 Our New Year's Day Walk will be a woodland walk of about 4 miles through Hoath and Cattering Woods. Meet at 2pm at Hall car park. Do join us, all welcome including dogs on leads. Further details from 01622 812338

MAKE 2014 THE YEAR YOU EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS AND VOLUNTEER TO ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY

Our village is fortunate to have many organisations which give enjoyment to members, help others and generally make life better for local people. Below are a few who could do with more volunteers – it's an eclectic selection, something to suit all ages and talents. You'll meet different people, use and develop your skills and you'll probably enjoy yourself too!

Parish Council Become a Parish Councillor – there are 2 vacancies. Ideally Councillors will live in various parts of the village so that when discussing any topic councillors will be able to put forward the concerns and aspirations of their neighbours. However, you can still apply if you live within a 3 mile radius of the village or own property or have business connections in the village. At the moment none of the councillors live in the Western area of the village, ie from the traffic lights to Pizien Well so if you live in these areas please do volunteer, but, of course, volunteers are welcome from any part of the village. Our Parish council work to improve the village environment. Councillors meet on the first Tuesday of each month for a formal, decision making meeting. In between times members are on other committees ie planning, allotments, cemeteries, transport, etc and represent the village's interests on various committees in the Borough and County. They also help practically from time to time ie in times of bad weather, with the general tidying up of the village, etc.

Rainbows We are looking for new volunteers to run the Rainbows! The unit is in need of new leaders to take over from Carolyn Peal and Karen Shute in the Spring/Summer of 2014. Volunteering within Girl Guiding is fun, interesting, a great way to get to know people and most of all very rewarding. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer in Girl Guiding, and particularly the Rainbow Unit, please give Carolyn Peal a call on 01622 812109.

Speedwatch To become a speedwatch volunteer you don't have to commit to a set time each week or month. Our local organizer arranges Speedwatch sessions to suit the availability of individuals. Groups of 3 people spend 1-2 hour sessions at points in the village envelope which have been agreed with the police; they note down, and pass on to the police, the registration numbers of vehicles travelling above the speed limit. Statistics show that the faster a vehicle is travelling the greater the injuries or chance of death if an accident occurs. So you would be helping to raise awareness of speed limits and making life safer for residents. Details from Charles Stroud 01622 815395.

Sports and Recreation Association and the Village Fete 2014 Members of the Association look after the day to day running of the village's playing fields on behalf of the Parish Council. The fields have a beautiful location and are a great asset to the village. Over the past 2 years the volunteers have regenerated and improved the grass pitches and also created wild flower areas. They hope to plant more wild flower areas, great for people to enjoy and even better they help bees and insects.

Following the success of the Jubilee Fete organised on 2 June 2013 by the Parish Council the Association plan to organise another such even in 2014. Volunteers are much needed to help the small committee plan, organise and run the event which proved such a hit in the summer. More details from John Ibbs 01622 813101.

Wateringbury Village Hall How about joining the group who run the hall, it's a great facility but it does need to be looked after and managed. There are a range of skills needed including maintenance, housekeeping, bookings, accounts, showing the hall off to potential hirers or even becoming a trustee. If you think you want to know more please contact Mike Hoiles [Chairman] 01622 813573. mikejhoiles@aol.com. Or just pop along most Thursday afternoons from 1pm when you will find us doing the housekeeping and maintenance tasks and even putting the world to rights whilst drinking tea.

McIntyre Care at Pelican Court The project supports adults and assists them to live as independently as possible. They would welcome volunteers who can help enhance life skills and add fulfilment to life by helping with cooking and crafts or by bringing music and entertainment to the residents. Karen, the manager, would be happy to tell you more 01622 814008.

Bell Ringing We desperately need more ringers at Wateringbury. Beginners and lapsed experienced ringers are all welcome. To find out more call 01622 812262.

Maidstone Lions members meet at The Bull, East Farleigh on the third Tuesday of the month, Usually the club donates over £15,000 a year to deserving causes in the Maidstone area. Maidstone Lions Club is a friendly and active club consisting of men and women of all ages and walks of life who care about their community. Its members enjoy the social fun and camaraderie of being with others who care, united in a common humanitarian purpose. For further information phone 01795 841439 or email m.w.luxton@btinternet.com,

FRIENDS OF WATERINGBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL (FOWPS)

At the time of going to press, we were making our final preparations for our Christmas Fayre on Saturday 23 November. Thank you to everyone who has been involved in this event including our committee, class reps, teachers and support staff, local businesses, families and the wider community. Special thanks to all the local businesses and organisations that have so generously supported us with donations, sponsorship and draw prizes. Thanks also to The Lions at Paddock Wood for all their assistance this year with transporting Father Christmas to our fayre.

We are now making our final push to raise enough funds to buy every classroom a SMART Board early in 2014 which is this year's top priority for funding. We are always on the look-out for local businesses and individuals who would like to get more involved with their local community by sponsoring school events, stalls or other initiatives in return for some great local publicity. If you would like to discuss this further please call Chairman Gail Isted on 01622 813716 or e-mail chairman@fowps.org.uk

Thank you for all your support in 2013 and we look forward to a fun-packed 2014. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all! Gail Isted,

NETTLESTEAD AND WATERINGBURY PRE-SCHOOL AND CLUBS (Charity No. 1144343)

During Term 1 we focussed on 'All About Me'. We have looked at ourselves in the mirror, spoken about our family, our hair colour, eye colour, favourite things and what we like to do. Many pictures have been done of the children's hand prints, photo copying their hands, pictures of themselves, plates of their favourite food, height chart, drawing our pets and much, much more. It has also been a time of getting to know the new playroom supervisor and I think we would all agree Elaine has come on board with lots of new and lovely ideas.

The chickens have landed! The children have been feeding Demelza and Rita with their food scraps and I know both chickens would like to say 'cluck cluck' chicken speak for lovely grub and thank you. We have many more pets coming to visit and will keep you posted in the New Year as to how they all got on.

Happy Christmas and A Peaceful New Year to you all. If you would like to join us please just turn up for a visit or ring on 01622 813120 or email on nettlesteadandwateringbury@yahoo.com or visit our website at www.nettlesteadandwateringbury.co.uk

COFFEE BREAK

Coffee Breakers have decided to meet on **Wednesday 18 December** for festive refreshments and to bring along the hats which some have been knitting for the Homeless in Maidstone. The first meeting of 2014 will be on **Wednesday 22 January** between **10.30-12.30**. The group meets on the fourth Wednesday morning of each month in the Church for tea, coffee and fellowship. Local transport available - please phone 01622 814673 to arrange a lift. In the meantime we wish everyone the Blessings of the Christmastide and look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Pauline and Gillian

THOUGHTS FROM THE VICARAGE

2 The Grange, East Malling ME19 6AH

e-mail jamesbrown.brown21@gmail.com - Benefice office ☎ 01732 843282

AN INVITATION TO PUT CHRIST BACK IN TO CHRISTMAS

For many people a Christmas crib is an important part of their celebrations. In a replica stable, shepherds, wise men and proud parents gather round a small child lying in a manger: this is how we imagine the tableau. But the reality was probably rather different. We know from Luke 2:8 that there was no room at the inn and Christ was laid in a manger (a drinking trough for animals), but that's it. However, in the centre of Bethlehem is The Church of the Nativity, built around 330AD by the emperor Constantine. It's thought to be the oldest church in existence and I have been privileged to have visited it on quite a few occasions. Beneath the church, in the grotto, is the birthplace itself. It seems quite surreal that this could be the very spot of Christ's birth. The very place where Christmas began. Sadly there are fewer Christians living in Bethlehem every year. It's almost as if Christ is being ignored in his actual place of birth.

But Christmas can mean other things for people. Christmas can be a time of parties, presents and turkey. It can be a time of Christmas trees, fairy lights and tinsel. It may have nothing to do with Christ. What does Christmas mean to you? What does Christmas mean to me? Well it may start with an Advent candle and then setting up a crib in the weeks before Christmas. But for my family and me, Christmas starts with Midnight Communion when we can really celebrate the birth of Jesus. I actually love to attend Church later on Christmas morning.

In Bethlehem, where there are fewer Christians, Christ will always remain a part of Christmas. In the world beyond there are many millions of Christians but, ironically, it seems Christ is being taken out of Christmas. It would be wonderful if we could put the CHRIST back into CHRISTMAS perhaps by filling our Church, your Church, by attending one of the special services over the Christmas period. The circulation of this magazine reaches over 2,000 residents so there should be enough people reading this to fill St John's many times over. It would be wonderful to see YOU in Church, putting the CHRIST back into CHRISTMAS as if we really were in Bethlehem ourselves.

I wish you a very Happy and Holy Christmas,

Rev Jim Brown

WATCH CLUB

All young people in school years 6-13 are welcome. For more details please phone Lisa 01622 812661 The next activities planned are:

8 December 5-7pm Christmas Party in the Village Hall

5 January 5-7pm Epiphany Party in the Church (village hall not available)

26 January back to village hall for usual activities.

CHURCH CHRISTMAS CRAFT BAZAAR

The provisional amount raised for church funds is £1,500. Organiser Jan Pursey thanks everyone for their generous support.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 10 NOVEMBER 2013

The provisional amount of £2,500 has been raised from the village collections for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. The total includes Gift Aid of £346 Organiser Larry Collins thanks everyone for their generosity for this much needed charity and would especially like to congratulate the School who collected £181 and the Railway Inn for £124. The Annual Parish Act of Remembrance Service was attended by all the village uniformed organisations and some with long-time village connections travelled

to be in Wateringbury to pay tribute to friends and relatives. The church collection of £595 (excluding gift aid) is included in the village total. The sun shone for the service, which was a blessing since it had rained very heavily on the Saturday morning so those tidying the churchyard in preparation for the service went home rather wet!

TOY SERVICE

Thank you to all who contributed gifts to make Christmas a little happier for women and children who will be in the care of local Women's Refuges this Christmas-time. Thanks too to children at the school who also collected nearly new toys for those less fortunate than themselves.

KENT CHAMBER CHOIR presents
MUSIC FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS
7.30pm, Saturday 7 December in Wateringbury Church
Conductor: Alan Vincent Bass Soloist Jack Holton Organist: Geoffrey Lester
Doors open at 7pm. Tickets, available at the door,
£10 (£5 children and full-time students).

The choir are joined by gifted bass soloist Jack Holton, Kent Chamber Choir's 2012 Kath Topping Winner and student at the London Guildhall School of Music and Drama
. The programme comprises a wide variety of popular and less well-known
Carols and Christmas Music,

POSADA

The crib figures of Mary and Joseph will be journeying round the village in December, returning to Church for the Crib Service on Christmas Eve. If you would like to welcome them into your home this year please contact Gillian Sessions on 01622 813076.

CHRISTMAS GIFT SUGGESTIONS

To your enemy, forgiveness; to an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to all, charity; to every child, a good example and to yourself, respect (M Arnold)

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms	20 October Ethan Stuart Harrison
	16 November Alice Hart-Champion
Funerals	14 October Hilda Peggy Fitzpatrick
	13 November John Benjamin

BENEFICE CHURCH SERVICES FOR DECEMBER AND JANUARY

Visit our website for full details www.wateringburychurch.org.uk

First Sunday in month 8am Holy Communion – Teston 9.45am Family Service – East Malling 9.45am Family Service – Teston 10am Christingle in December Matins in January – Wateringbury	Second Sunday in month 8am Holy Communion – East Malling 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling 10am Holy Communion - Wateringbury 6.30pm Evening Prayer - Teston
Third Sunday in month 8am Holy Communion – Wateringbury 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling 10 am Family Service Children’s Nativity in December – Wateringbury 6.30pm Eucharist - Teston	Fourth Sunday in month 8am Holy Communion – East Malling 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling 10am Holy Communion – Wateringbury 6.30pm Evening Praise - Teston
Sunday 29 December – Benefice Service – 10am in Wateringbury Church	
Every Monday – 2-3pm – Scout & Guide HQ, Glebe Meadow – Toddler Praise	
Every Thursday - 9am in East Malling Church – Holy Communion	
For Baptisms, Weddings and other arrangements with the vicar please attend the Parish Office at the Vicarage on Wednesdays between 6.30-7.15pm	

Special Services in December

Sunday 1 December at 10am – **Christingle Service**

Tuesday 3 December **District WI Carol Service** – 7.30pm

Tuesday 10 December at 7.30pm - **Advent Taize Service**

15 December at 10am – **Children’s Nativity in Family Service**

All children are warmly invited to take part in our Sunday School Nativity Rehearsals will take place at lunchtimes at Wateringbury School. For further details please contact Becky Bowie (becky.bowie@gmail.com).

Monday 16 December at 6pm - **School Carol Service in Church**

Thursday 19 December 8pm – **9 Lessons and Carols by Candlelight**

Christmas Eve - 5pm **Crib Service** - 11.30pm **Midnight Communion**

Christmas Day – 10.30am **Family Eucharist**

Quiet Hours 8-9pm **Wednesdays 10 December** and **14 January**

Services of Healing and Wholeness

Tuesday 3 December – Communion at 8pm in East Malling Church

Tuesday 7 January – Meditation Service at 8pm in Teston Church

NEW PATTERN FOR TUESDAY EVENING SERVICES IN WATERINGBURY CHURCH

For the next few months the Tuesday evening services will be as follows:

First Tuesday Healing Service which rotates round the Benefice – 8pm
Second Tuesday Taize Worship led by Bob and Becky Bowie - 7.30pm
Third Tuesday Communion Service – 7.30pm
Fourth Tuesday Evening Service with the choir – 7.30pm