

THE WELL

**Kemsing Village Magazine
with news from Woodlands**



**Christmas in Kemsing over
the years. See pages 16 / 17**

Christmas 2013 No 192

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Editorial Team:- Doreen Farrow, Janet Eaton & Rosemary Banister
We reserve the right to edit [i.e. cut, précis, alter, correct grammar or spelling] any item published, and our decision is final.

The editorial team wish a very Happy Christmas and 2014 to all our readers.

Cover Picture taken on the wedding day of Alf & Winnie Haynes, the 1st January 1928, at St Mary's Church.

Alf was Verger to St Mary's Church from 1953 to 1982.

COPY FOR NEXT ISSUE by 1st February 2014 please.

THE WELL - is published and distributed free, four times a year by the Parochial Church Councils of St Mary's Church, Kemsing and St Mary's Church, Woodlands, to encourage and stimulate the life of the community. The views expressed in the magazine do not necessarily represent official church opinion or policy.

If you use a computer to type your article, it would be extremely helpful if you could Email it to: welleditors@hotmail.co.uk or send it to the Editors c/o Poppies Cottage, 3, St. Edith's Road, Kemsing TN15 6PT,

For postal subscriptions, contact Debbie Pierson—01732 762033

Christmas Services at St Mary's Kemsing

Sunday 15th December

7.00 pm 9 Lessons and Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 22nd December

4-6 pm Carol Singing around the Village ←
New! See special postcards for times and places

Tuesday 24th December (Christmas Eve)

2.00 pm Crib Service for Tiny Tots

3.45 pm Crib Service

then Carols at the Well

11.30pm Midnight Holy Communion

Wednesday 25th December (Christmas Day)

8.00 am Traditional Communion

9.30 am Family Communion Service

"Yet to all who did receive him ... he gave the right to become children of God"

Vicar's Letter

Dear Friends,

How old is Christmas?

Most of us were brought up on the Christmas traditions we enjoy, so it feels that they've been around forever. Actually, most of them are comparatively recent.

Christmas trees were introduced to Britain by Queen Victoria, who knew of the custom from the German side of her family, and introduced them on a large scale after marrying Prince Albert. Henry VIII was the first British monarch to eat turkey at Christmas, although this did not become widespread until Victorian times. Christmas crackers arose after a London confectioner was impressed by the way Parisians wrapped their bonbons. He replicated it here, adding the banging component later once sweet sales began to dwindle.



Most of our modern Christmas customs are about 150 years old. That's older than most readers of *The Well*, but only just beyond the lifetime of some readers' grandparents.

Of course, the Christmas story is older than that. Jesus was born in Bethlehem in about the year 4 BC. That is just over 2000 years ago. It could be said, then, that Christmas itself is 2000 years old.

However that would make it far too much of a novelty. Christmas is much older than that. It's over 3500 years old. The birth of Jesus is recorded at the midpoint of an English Bible. The books of the Bible before those retelling the life of Jesus are God's account of God's actions before Jesus was born. The later books of the Bible are God's account of how to live in the light of Jesus' birth, death, resurrection and return to heaven.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, God put into operation his plan to save the world through the death of his own Son. The plan itself goes back before the dawn of time. The first 39 books of the Bible contain the events leading up to this great moment, and the gradual unfolding of God's loving purposes.

At our Christmas carol services on 15th December, we hear readings from throughout the Bible, giving us a cross-section of God's whole plan. During 2014, some people in the 2 churches will read right through the Bible to discover Jesus freshly – including all God said before his birth.

The fact is: What God did at Christmas was too wonderful and comprehensive for him to have dreamt it up on the back of an envelope in 7 BC. And that means it's worth celebrating as best we can – with whatever old or new customs we most enjoy.

With every blessing. Your friend and vicar,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized, with a long horizontal stroke under the 'J'.

James Oakley

St MARY the VIRGIN PARISH CHURCH, KEMSING

www.kemsingwithwoodlands.org

Vicar	Rev. James Oakley	01732 762556
Wardens	Ray Parton	01959 523045
	Jean Walker	01732 761646
Parish Office	Margaret Robarts	01732 761351
Readers	Mary Quenby	01959 522079
	Philip Walker	01732 761646
	Ruth Mason	01959 524486

The Parish Office (in the Church Hall) is open from 10am-noon on Mondays and 10.00 - 5pm on Thursdays. Answer phone at other times is 01732 761351.

Apart from 5th Sunday, the pattern of services is as follows:

- 08.00 Communion in traditional language
- 09.15 Sung Communion service (followed by coffee in the Church Hall)
- 10.30 Morning Service (with coffee in the Church Hall beforehand) Sunday Special on every Sunday apart from 1st Sunday of the month which is the 'All-Age' service..
- 18.30 Evening Service (Evensong twice a month, a number of other formats twice a month)

The service pattern on the 5th Sunday will be:

- 08.00 BCP Matins
- 09.00 Breakfast in the Church Hall
- 10.00 Combined service with Woodlands
- 18.30 Evensong

For details of Christmas Services at Kemsing and Woodlands, please see pages 3 & 19.

Our Christingle service will take place this year on Sunday 1st December at 10.30am.

Please note that the Crib Service on Christmas Eve at 3.45pm will be followed by the walk to The Well for Carols. We have applied to close the road between St. Edith's Rd and the Village Car Park between 4pm and 5pm.

SERVICES at St. Mary's Woodlands

1st Sunday	4.30	Evening Praise
2nd Sunday	11.30	Morning Praise
3rd Sunday	4.30	The Lord's Supper [Informal Communion]
4th Sunday	11.30	Holy Communion
5th Sunday	10.00	Combined Informal Communion Service for both Churches, usually to be held in Kemsing

Children are warmly welcomed at all of our services. Coffee is served from 10.45 to 11.15. before morning services. Evening services are followed by a light meal

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SHOEBOX TRIUMPH!



Many thanks to everyone in Kemsing who prepared a shoebox (or several) for Operation Christmas Child. In the end, the number of boxes collected from St Mary's Kemsing and St Mary's Woodlands was over 80, a big increase on last year. Please pray for the children who will receive these boxes in countries with great need.

Next year we would like to ask everyone in the village to help with this appeal. We would love to increase our number of boxes to over 100—bear it in mind for next year!

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The Legion was formed in 1921 and is the nation's premier service charity. It is here for helping ex-service men, women and their families in need, in many different ways.

Kemsing Branch was formed in 1937 but was dormant from 1947 to 1953. We currently have 60 members including 12 transferred from the recently closed Seal men's branch. The age of membership and committee continues to increase.

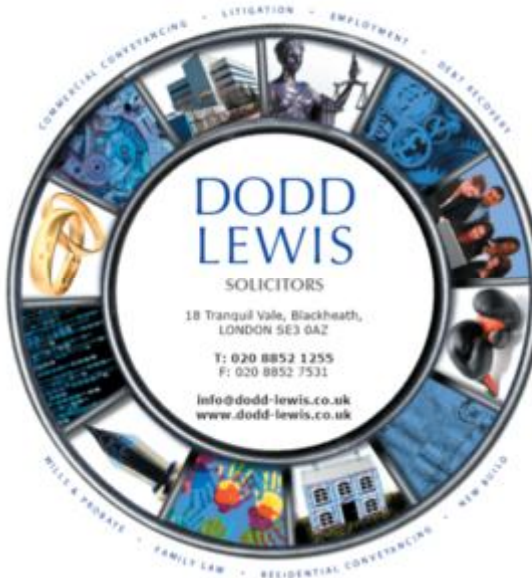
We have an informal and popular sandwich lunch in 'The Bell', Kemsing, on the first Monday of each month, providing this is not a Bank Holiday. The attendance is around 20 members.

My concern is the future of our branch. Several local branches have closed, and if we were unable to continue it would seriously affect the Remembrance Day Parade, our service to the village and, of course, the Poppy Appeal collection which is the Legion's main fundraising event.

We need younger members, male or female, to continue the good work, and you do not need to have served in the armed forces to qualify.

If you would like to join us, please contact our Secretary, Dennis Brown on 01959 522775 or me on 01732 761774.

Mike Parker, Chairman.



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REPORT FROM KEMSING PARISH COUNCIL

As a Parish Council we once again had a busy year with the regular Parish Council meetings and Committee meetings and the time has just flown by. We welcome back Mr. Tony Andrews, who was co-opted in May 2013. Tony will be known to many residents as he was a Parish Councillor for many years, including Chairman of the Parish Council from 1998 to 2005. There is still one Parish Councillor vacancy. Parish Councils are the most local part of the democratic system. As community leaders, they represent the objectives and concerns of the residents they serve. There are three main areas of work which involve decision making, monitoring, and getting involved locally. Being a Parish Councillor is an enjoyable way of contributing to your community. The formal part of the role is to attend monthly Parish Council meetings and some Committee meetings. The less formal part is listening and talking to people, including the local elected members of the District and County Councils. Parish Councillors generally say that their duties occupy them for about three hours a week, but obviously there are some Councillors who spend more time than this – some less. If you feel this role is for you, please write to me.

There have been repeated unauthorised bonfires on Green Hill. If anybody has any information about these fires or sees combustible material being deposited at Green Hill, please inform the Police by telephoning 101 with the details.

Just a reminder that all Parish Council meetings are open to the public and are usually held in the Small Hall, St Edith Hall and commence at 7.30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to come along to a meeting. Minutes and agenda are available on the Parish Council's website, notice board at St Edith Hall, or Kemsing Library.

Parish Council meetings : 15 January 2014, 19 February 2014, 19 March 2014.
Annual Parish Meeting : 26 March 2014.

There are many people to thank and I would like to extend my personal appreciation to all the Parish Councillors for giving their time so generously and for their hard work and commitment in striving to keep Kemsing a pleasant place to live and work. Thank you to our Litter Wardens, Fred Lomas and John Farrow, for clearing litter on the Recreation Grounds, shops and roads. Thank you to Bob Banister, warden for Green Hill, for looking after that part of the Kemsing Downs Nature Reserve. Also to the Co-opted Members on the Downland Management Committee (Caroline Copleston, Anne Barratt and Norna Munson), and to our District Councillors Miss Lorraine Stack and Mr. Mark Butler as well as Police Community Support Officer Sue Harwood for their support on issues affecting Kemsing.

The Council would like to wish everybody a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful 2014.

Yolanda Tredoux (Parish Clerk)



Ightham Mote has exciting events to offer throughout December as we open for the Christmas season. For the first time in the winter season the Billiards room will be open and you will have the opportunity to play a game of billiards. Peter Watson one of our volunteers, an expert on the game will be in attendance on Wednesdays & Saturdays during December to offer advice on the rules of the game and for the uninitiated how to play.

We will be open everyday from 11.00am -3.00pm in December for seasonal activities old and new. The Great Hall will be decorated for a Victorian Christmas and the Library for a 1950's New England Christmas in celebration of our American donor Charles Henry Robinson. For the children there will be a seasonal activities everyday, whether it is making snowflakes or decorations there will be plenty to occupy them throughout their visit.

To get into the Christmas spirit we offer a traditional carols in the Ightham Mote courtyard with a glass of mulled wine. Christmas lunches will be available every day - see below

To round off the Christmas break why not book a Boxing Day trek- a full English breakfast followed by an informal guided walk or how about a New Years day trek to start 2014 in great style. If 1st of January does not appeal we also offer roast & rambles every Sunday throughout January - two course lunch followed by a gentle ramble

During February we will open Saturdays & Sundays 11.00am -3.00pm for the Shop and Restaurant and for romantics among you why not book a table for our Valentine's dinner on Friday 14th. Finally, children activities are on offer for the half term weekends of 15th/16th & 22/23rd February.

Dates for your December, January & February diary:

1- 23 Dec 12.00-2.00pm Christmas lunches 2 course £22.95, 3 course £25.95

Fri 13, Sat 14, Fri 20 & Sat 21 Dec "Carols in the Courtyard" mulled wine & carols followed by 2course buffet supper £29.50

26 Dec Boxing Day trek –full English breakfast followed by guided walk £21.50

1 Jan 14 New Year's Day trek - full English breakfast followed by guided walk £21.50

14 Feb 14 Valentine's dinner £37.50

Bookings are essential for all above please call the Restaurant on 01732 811314

For more information; www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ighthammote or 01732 810378 ext 100

NEWS and NOTES

This Summer saw building work at **St Edith Hall**. The hall was closed for the month of August so that the toilets, built in the 1970's, could be refurbished and much better facilities for the disabled user installed.

The Management Committee is grateful to the **Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust** who provided £12,000 towards the building work and the fitting out of the new disabled facility. The Committee also thanks the Parish Council who stepped in at the last moment to fund the updating of the Gents toilets at the same time. The hall reopened in early September and we believe the updated facilities will provide a better environment for all our hirers.

Paul Burfield, Chairman, SEHMC

Many people will have read in the *Sevenoaks Chronicle* about a possible proposal from the St Clere Estate for a large (111 acres, 45 hectares) of agricultural land to be used as a solar farm. The fields earmarked for the project lie to the east of Watery Lane, south of the M26 and north east of Kemsing Station. They are currently used for crops and lie within an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Sevenoaks District Council said that it would possibly be in place for 25 years. Before a planning application is submitted, St Clere have been advised to undertake an environmental impact assessment, and a scoping survey to assess whether there are protected species on the land. We shall keep you informed of any future developments in this matter.

The **craft group** have been exceedingly busy through the year making items for shoeboxes for Smile International. It takes a lot of money to fill a shoebox properly and when they are checked there are often a number of items missing, this is where our help and support comes in. We have sent: 272 pairs of mitts, 174 hats, 201 scarves, 55 pencil cases, 129 bags & 54 purses, numerous hairbands, dressed dolls, dressed bears and blankets. It equates to almost a thousand items. *Well done to the Craft Group ladies—a marvellous effort.*

It is always pleasing to see the effort taken by the uniformed youth organisations to attend the **Remembrance Sunday** church service and parade in the village. I cannot help but notice that numbers attending at the war memorial seem to be increasing a little year on year. I believe it is important that local communities take the trouble to attend this once a year Act of Remembrance for all who lost their lives and those who have had their lives changed through injury as a result of them serving our country in conflicts throughout the world. There is a strong community spirit here in Kemsing and John O'Sullivan at the Bell Pub is an example of this when he opened his doors on Sunday and supplied coffee free of charge to anyone who had got cold standing by the war memorial. I know it was very much appreciated by all concerned. A big thank you.

Mike Cursons Parade Co-ordinator



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Kemsing Heritage Centre Association—Grants

One of the objectives of the Kemsing Heritage Centre Association is to promote the research, preservation and enjoyment of the history of Kemsing and the immediate surrounding area. In order to fulfil this aim, it has established a small fund which is available to provide grants to any person or group carrying out research on a voluntary basis.

Grants could cover, but would not be limited to, direct expenses such as printing, photocopying and purchasing of copyrights, travel expenses and publication costs. The grants will not cover remuneration for time spent by the applicant(s).

It is a condition of granting any money for research or publication that a summary of the results/copy of the publication must be submitted promptly for lodging in the Heritage Centre and for possible publication on its website.

The Trustees meet on a regular basis, usually every eight weeks. Applications should be made to the Treasurer, David Williams, and will be considered by the Trustees at their following meeting. For further information and an application form, please contact David Williams by email on redcourt@dsl.pipex.com or by post to Red Court, Woodland Rise, Seal, Sevenoaks TN15 0JB.



For the seventeenth time, St Mary's Church is organising a North Downs Challenge Walk. In 2014 the event will take place on Saturday 10th May, the closing date for entries being 19th April. This event should not be confused with a sponsored walk or race, it is neither, it is a challenge against yourself.

As usual, the walks will cover 11, 15 or 20 miles of the beautiful North Downs, starting and finishing at St Mary's Church, The entry fee of £13 for adults and £6 for under 18's. It covers tea and biscuits at the start, and light refreshments at the checkpoints, with a sandwich and cake tea at the finish plus a completion certificate. Event badges are also available for purchase. The profits from the walk help to subsidise major projects at Woodlands and Kemsing Churches.

Everyone who walked last year will automatically receive an entry form and those whose entry were declined through lack of space will be sent first. The limit on numbers is 250 walkers. Please be aware that entries are not accepted on the day.

For an entry form, please contact Pauline Mallinson at 125 Pilgrims Way, Kemsing or 01959 524725, or email: trevorpauline@tiscali.co.uk.





Above: The Boxing Day hunt in the 1980's.

Below: Let's hope we don't get snow like this again.



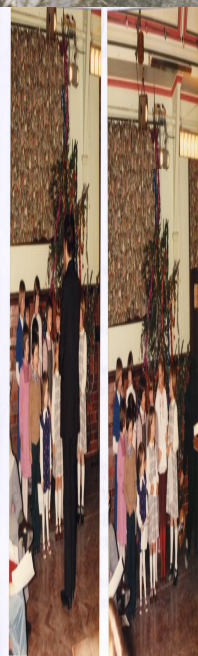
Children at a K
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IN CHRISTMAS PAST



The Chequers at Heaverham in the snow.

More scenes of the Boxing Day hunt



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Christmas Services at Woodlands

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followed by light refreshments

Tue 24th December (Christmas Eve)

5.30 pm Carols around the Crib

followed by light refreshments

Wed 25th December (Christmas Day)

11.00am Communion Service

*"Yet to all who did receive him ...
he gave the right to become children of God"*

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KEMSING SCHOOL REPORT

Another Autumn and another packed term at Kemsing Primary School. We welcomed Miss Williams, (Reception class), Miss Smith (TA in class 3) and Mr Tipler (Rugby coach and TA). We are pleased to announce that Mrs Brookbanks had a baby girl, named Bethany on September 7th. There was much excitement when they visited earlier this term.

Year 6 went off to Rippledawn, near Deal for our residential trip. The children took part in a variety of activities; pond dipping, rock pooling, environmental art, map and compass work, and visits to Dover Castle, the wartime tunnels and St Margaret's lighthouse. We also visited Dover Coast Guard, where we were allowed into the operations room to witness how they manage 400 vessels crossing the Channel each day! We finished off the week at Canterbury Cathedral in costume, re-enacting the story of Thomas à Beckett.

The whole school had photos taken and designed Christmas cards. In October we had our Harvest Festival Service at the church. Parents were packed in and enjoyed a variety of songs performed by all the classes. The school council decided that the money collected (£200.00) should be split between St. Mary's and The Alzheimers Society. More recently we had a special visit from Margaret Crabtree (the Deputy Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform). She enjoyed having lunch with the children.

The School council have organised several events this year as part of their fundraising. We had a pyjama day for Children in Need and Project Storm (Philippines). In the Spring they will be supporting the local Scout group.

Finally, Christmas is coming which is a great time of year to be in school. The PTA are organising the Christmas Fayre. Blunderbus Theatre Company are visiting and there will be the usual class parties at the end of the term. Key Stage 2 are going to the Polka Theatre to see the musical Alice in Wonderland.

We hope that parents will join us for Carols by Candlelight in the church Celebration of Christmas by Key Stage 2, and the Key Stage 1 Nativity on 16th December.

Helen Brown, Key Stage 2

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Service Partner



Eliza Ecclestone, managing trustee, has suggested that we might include an occasional report from St. Clare. Here is her first contribution.

“LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR

We have a lot of neighbours. We have residents of Kemsing, Heverham, Seal, Wrotham, Ightham, Otford, West Kingsdown, Ash and Stansted neighbouring our land. When we took over running the estate we wrote a plan for the estate, and one of our three key values is to steward the estate for the benefit of our family, staff and tenants, and for the benefit of our neighbours. I love living in this corner of England where there is so little change to the landscape, and I imagine our neighbours do too.....

But to keep the house standing, the farm running, the hedgerows trimmed, the cottages habitable, the footpaths walkable and the woodlands managed takes time and money. I have had to accept that sometimes we have to make compromises and to seize opportunities to bring in money even when ideally I would like to keep this place frozen in time. Not moving forward is not an option, estates all over England have been sold off in pieces because they didn't move with the times.

Since we've moved in here we have been overwhelmingly supported by our neighbours. We've unwittingly annoyed other neighbours. I hate upsetting people, and in this role, that's a real problem. I am slowly learning to develop a thicker skin. There was the neighbour who wrote to us once we'd lived here for two months letting me know how arrogant he found the fact that we hadn't introduced ourselves to him. There are the neighbours who find it intolerable that we won't allow dogs to be walked off footpaths however many times we explain there are often guns fired to control vermin in those areas and we are worried they might get shot! People don't like the fact that at harvest time our grain is picked up by huge lorries sent by the people we've sold the grain to, and those lorries cause inconvenience and difficulty moving through Wrotham. Others hate it when we occasionally have to burn linseed straw after harvest. I would argue that such inconvenience is part of living in the middle of farmland, and that it is only by economies of scale that the land can continue being farmed. If farmland doesn't make money, it will inevitably end up being sold for other use. I am told I can't please all the people all the time, but I find that nearly unbearable! I just hope that most of the people notice that we are doing our best as stewards of the countryside.

The decisions we're taking at the moment are likely to impact on our neighbours. Our monstrous farm site, with the two huge blue silos which can be seen from all over the valley is in desperate need of demolition. But it's going to cost a fortune to take down the towers so we need to try to pay for that somehow. We are about to put in planning applications for the site. I will be very interested to see how the development proposals are viewed by our neighbours. My hope is that they will agree with me that, although the site is within an AONB, it is currently an Site of Outstanding Unnatural Ugliness and that on this occasion, staying still is a worse option than making change”.

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News from Cotmans Ash

WE SHOULD REMEMBER THEM

I am writing my note on Trafalgar Day (21st October) - seems no longer the National Commemoration day it was of my youth, which saddens me – we need old Nelson right now, he'd soon sort 'em out and restore our 'National Pride'.

The hot breathless days of August now seem well behind us, those days of relentless heat that left the countryside parched and thirsty with the sun rising and setting in a cloudless sky. On the bonus side is the enormous crop of wild fruit, particularly acorns, beech mast and the wayfaring tree – on the hedge tops the brambles and sloes are laden and waiting for the great flocks of migrating birds flying in from Eastern Europe. These evenings of early winter and fading sunsets to the west over Polhill make a spectacular backdrop of the last remnants of autumn shades across the billowing treetops in Cockneys Wood rising southward to Seal Chart. It seems only days away that I sat here on my high seat in the evening sunshine and watched a couple of hundred swallows high in the sky above my head dipping and diving, feeding on invisible swarms of gnats and flies, building themselves up for their long journey south into the sunshine of Africa. True to form, next morning there wasn't a bird in the sky. Man has walked on the moon, gathered dust samples on Mars, but can still only guess at the marvel of migration! Star patterns, the sun, the moon, earth's magnetic field, Gulf Stream, wind drift – Who knows? It seems only they know!" Now they have gone and it is long until next May when they return.

Rising from the Wrotham hills to the east, travelling westward over the downland villages of Kemsing, Otford, Chipstead and Brasted – turning the hills into a blaze of autumn colours, a broad band of palest yellow, through red and amber to deepest 'Klondyke' gold makes a perfect backdrop. The principle colours are from great thickets of bright yellow from field maple, the scarlet and red of wild cherry and sycamore, whitebeam in burnished gold and silver underleaf which are the most predominate trees of the North Downs. Nature has laid up great provision of wild fruit and seed this year – the road banks and hedge tops of the Pilgrims road are an orchard of wild berries, blackberries, scarlet rose hips and deep purple globes on wild privet – the dog woods and the quite sinister looking blue/black fruits of purging blackthorn. The Queen of the hedgerow is the humble spindle tree – wands of lovely coral pink berries that split into four chambers to reveal bright orange seed – all surely a banquet awaiting the great flocks of migrating birds soon to arrive from Scandinavia and Eastern Europe.

Between now and Christmas we remember the fallen of two World Wars – Kemsing like the rest of the Nation closed down for just two minutes, not too much to ask – the old warriors get less each year and it's down to us 'youngsters' to carry the banner (most in our eighties!) The gun on the Vine will sound off echoing across our downland villages as they did in the chaos of war on the Somme and the poppy fields of Flanders – "We should remember them" *Brian Doe*

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FAMILY MILESTONES

Baptisms

Robin Dilley on 6th October 2013

Weddings

Mark Schwarz and Emma Ashman on 28th September 2013

Deaths—Rest in Peace

John Lewis (81) on 19th August 2013

Brenda Evans(87) on 20th October 2013

Bert Skinner (86) on 18th November 2013

From: “**Kemsing Parish Magazine**” **January 1964.**

The **Brownies** performed a Nativity play with great vigour and spontaneity according to the Vicar ((Reverend G. M. Young). At the AGM of the **CEMS** (Church of England Men’s Society) Messrs Fenton, Payne, Warden, and Boobyer were elected to the offices of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. A sub-committee of the **Parish Council** was formed to report on immediate and possible long-term improvements to the St Edith Hall. The Council had been represented at an appeal hearing against the Rural District Council’s refusal to grant planning permission for building between Noah’s Ark and Greenlands Road. An expanding population and the constraints of the village planning envelope were to prove a constant problem. Amongst those who passed away was **Douglas Woodcock**, aged 85.

From “**The Well**” **Christmas 1988.**

The **Gardener’s Society** held a buffet supper on 22 October at which approx. 90 members and guests were present. Mr L Sims won the Phyllis Boiling Trophy as the champion gardener of the year. A **Parish Week-end** took place at Ashburnham Place, near Battle and was enjoyed by 112 parishioners from Kemsing and Woodlands. Vic Bowden wrote about **The Tithe Map of Kemsing** carried out by William Cronk of Seal in 1839, in response to the passing of the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 that attempted to bring some order into the system of tithing and assign a monetary value to land. William Cronk, and his son John’s, work was finally approved by the Tithe Commissioners in 1841. All in all Kemsing was not the pleasant place to live in that it is today. (A copy of the Tithe Map of 1839 is in the Heritage Centre).

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ARTHUR (BERT) SKINNER 1927—2013



Bert, as many knew him, was one of three brothers, Howard and Bill, and two sisters, Ivy and Jeannie. Bert lived all his life in Kemsing, and the Skinner family are one of the oldest village families who make up our community.

He was a motor engineer for 42 years, working at first for Bates Garages in Seal, then in Orpington until 1949, thereafter for West End Garages for the Welsteads. For many years he was the foreman, latterly working for Ian McLaughlin who took over the Garage (now Kemsing Motors). What Bert didn't know about cars wasn't worth knowing.

Bert was a Churchwarden from 1980 to 1997 and maintained his support for St Mary's Church until the end of his life. He was a member of the Church Choir, man and boy, for over 50 years, and had a wonderful voice which led the Choir on many occasions. He also supported the Kemsing Players in their Music Hall events. Bert and Olive were long standing cooks for the Lunch Club, and for many years cooked for diners much younger than themselves!

Bert and Olive married in 1952 and had two daughters, Barbara and Ruth. He was one of our true villagers, and will be greatly missed, not least because he was always willing to offer advice and support to anyone who needed it.

He fought a brave fight against kidney failure, and survived after a kidney transplant for many more years. The Bert Skinner Medical Fund was set up in his name, and the funds from this supported many other people from the village who had specific medical needs.

As a village we have lost one of our most influential and much-loved inhabitants, and we shall miss him tremendously.

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|| =====

Village Diary

December

- 2nd Rhyme Time for under 5s every Tuesday 2.15-2.45 Kemsing Library
5th Tea/Coffee, biscuits Kemsing library every Thursday 10.30-11.30 £1.50
6th Wildlife Group. Christmas Scottish Shindig. 8pm. St Edith Large Hall £2
7th Kemsing Singers Concert for Cancer Research 7.30 St. Nicholas Church Sevenoaks, tickets adults £10.under 16s £5. from J.Course 01732 761606
10th Kemsing Gardeners Society . *Gardeners Questions* St. Edith small hall 7.45
11th W.I. Party '*Christmas Day Records*' by R. Spiller St. Edith small hall 7.45
13th? Story Time for children starts mid December Kemsing library 2.15-2.45
13th/ Kemsing Singers Christmas Concert St. Edith hall 7.30 tickets adults £8.
14th OAPs £6. children £4. From 9 Cleves Rd., 01959 523752
20th Trefoil Guild Christmas meal details from C. Scales 01959 523200

January 2014

- 2nd Tea /coffee, biscuits Kemsing Library every Thursday 10.30-11.30 £1.50
7th Rhyme Time for under 5s Kemsing library every Tuesday 2.15-2.45
8th W.I. St. Edith small hall 7.45 talk by R. Pearson '*Australia*'
10th Kemsing Heritage Centre St. Edith Hall 7.30 '*Discovery Evening*' an opportunity to items recently donated to the H.C. Members free, non members £2.00 tickets on the door.
16th Trefoil Guild St. Mary's Church Hall 7.45 details from Sec. 01959 523200

February

- 4th Rhyme Time for under 5s Kemsing library every Tuesday 2.15-2.45
6th Tea/coffee, biscuits Kemsing library every Thursday 10.30-11.30 £1.50
7th Heritage Centre talk by Colin Lyle '*Sugar Town*' Includes the Lyle family History and information on Otford Manor. St. Edith small hall 7.30, members free, visitors £2.00 tickets on the door.
12th W.I. St. Edith small hall 7.45 talk by I. Porter '*Call the Midwife*'
14th Wildlife Group talk by Lynne Flower '*Conservation of Wildlife Ponds*' 8pm St. Edith small Hall admission £2.00
15th Heritage Centre Association AGM 2.30 St. Edith small hall members and visitors welcome.
20th Trefoil Guild St. Mary's Church Hall 7.45 details from Sec. 01959 523200

March

- 4th Rhyme Time for under 5s Kemsing library every Tuesday 2.15-2.45
6th Tea/coffee, biscuits Kemsing library every Thursday 10.30-11.30 £1.50
7th Heritage Centre talk by D. Chapman '*Pilgrims Way in Kent*' St. Edith hall 7.30 members free, visitors £2.00 tickets on the door.
11th Gardeners Club AGM St. Edith small hall 8.00
12th W.I. St. Edith small hall 7.45 talk on '*Hospice in the Weald*'
14th Wildlife Group talk by Barbara Darby '*Wildlife of the World*' 8pm St. Edith Small Hall admission £2.00
15th Scouts Jumble Sale, items to St. Edith hall from 9.30 Sale starts 1.30 £1.00 entry
20th Trefoil Guild St. Mary's Church Hall 7.45 details from Sec. 01959 523200
26th Annual Parish Meeting. St. Edith Hall 7.30pm. All residents welcome.

NB The Heritage Centre is open between 10am and Noon on the first Saturday of each and every month. Visitors are always welcome.

		
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