Frozen Fields and Skies of Blue
Evening Light a Misty Hue
Breaks Away and Holiday Finds
Romantic Gestures on Valentines
Using up Stored Veg and Fruit
And Fields of Lambs, Oh so Cute
Rambles on a Sunny Day
Yes It’s the Shortest Month They Say

Kate Brownett
## ROMNEY MARSH BENEFICE SERVICES FEBRUARY 2017

### DYMCHURCH

<table>
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<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
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<td>HC / Morning prayer</td>
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### NEWCHURCH

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### BURMARSH

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### NEW ROMNEY

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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
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<td>7.00 pm</td>
<td>Celtic Calm</td>
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<td>5th</td>
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<td>19th</td>
<td>10.30 am - 6:30 pm</td>
<td>HC : Blaise Healing Service</td>
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<td>Family Service</td>
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### OLD ROMNEY

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### ST MARY’S BAY

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### ST MARY in the MARSH

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### IVYCHURCH

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<td>Evensong</td>
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Dear friends,

In my ministry, I’ve quite often been confronted by people who accuse Christians and the church in general of hypocrisy. They do this for a variety of reasons but one reason they cite is that the church is full of people just going through the rituals.

This is an observation that is sometimes made by new Christians or those who have recently returned to church life. When they start coming to church, they say, they see members of the congregation who don’t seem to enter into the worship with any vigour, they don’t seem to sing the hymns, they certainly don’t seem to be listening to the sermon, they don’t even seem to pray, and they don’t seem to want to share in fellowship with their brothers and sisters. Such Christians say that many well-established members of the church have apparently lost the fervour and commitment that perhaps they once had.

I think most of us have had some of these feelings and many of us still do from time to time. And when I’m thinking this way I’m also thinking to myself – “Well, they’re like that, they’re lukewarm about the Christian faith and about their worship. But I’m not like that. I throw myself into it, body and soul. I sing loud. I speak up in the prayers. I know the responses. I study the Bible and the faith. And I live out my religion. I give a sensible amount to the Church and to good causes.”

And so it goes on. Remind you of anything? Yes. Jesus’ parable about the Pharisee and the publican. You remember the one. Jesus depicts two characters, a Pharisee and a tax collector who go to the temple to pray. The Pharisee stands up and thanks God that he’s not like all the other nasty sinful people. The tax collector, on the other hand, stays at the back of the church – like a good Anglican – and doesn’t even look up – again like many a good Anglican - and admits he’s a sinner. And Jesus commends the tax collector and not the Pharisee. I must confess to you that occasionally I, probably out of the sincerest of motives, compare myself with others – just like the Pharisee – and find that they lack some important something, that by implication, I have.

So how can we overcome this tendency, which I think exists in many of us, to make judgements of this kind? The answer, surely, is that we must avoid making comparisons at all. Instead we must simply acknowledge to ourselves that each one of us is a much-loved child of God, created in the divine image, and redeemed through Jesus Christ. This doesn’t, of course, mean that we will not be making any judgements in this life. But what it does mean is that when we do make judgements we must never conclude that we have the one right answer. Even if we think we do something better than another person that doesn’t mean we are somehow better, wiser or holier than them. We must not think that because we think we are more diligent at serving God, at giving, at attending worship, or whatever it is, that we are more important than those who are apparently less diligent, less generous or less regular. Nor should we think that because we work hard, pay our taxes, and do not claim benefits, that we are better than other people.

God loves us all equally, cares for us all with that boundless love shown in Jesus. He calls on us to try to imitate him. Therefore, let us endeavour not to make comparisons but rather to remember that each and every person is a cherished and beloved child of God our heavenly Father.

With love in Christ, Julie
**LENT**: We are rapidly approaching the season of Lent, a time for looking at ourselves, at what we are rather than at what we do; a time to allow God to change us into what He wants us to be. To be specific, I hope there are two aspects of our lives that we consider, firstly our working with other people rather than on our own, and secondly, on allowing ourselves to be shaped by the word of God, rather than following some supposedly Christian self-help manual. There will once again be an opportunity this Lent to meet in groups with members of different churches in the Romney Marsh Benefice, groups that I trust will be prayerful, open and honest. We shall focus our reflections on the words from the Psalms and the film *The Passion of Christ*. Let them re-form us this Lent, changing what we are and therefore transforming what we do. Then, let's do the things we always do with greater confidence that these are not our good works, but God's, and that what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, with us serving the community in his name. (Yes, you are supposed to hear echoes of 2 Corinthians 45!)

**WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

“**Am I Being Unfair to You?”**

**St Peter & St Paul Dymchurch ~ Friday 3rd March at 2:00pm**

On Friday 3rd March over 3 million people worldwide will be praying and worshipping together during an annual day of prayer, using a form of service prepared by Christian women in France. By the end of the day over 170 countries and more than 6,000 services will have been held in the British Isles alone. In the service those issues of concern are named and the women voice their hope for the future. The service written by the Christian women of the Philippines is on the theme of justice: a highly relevant subject in today’s world. Before I read it, I half expected it to be about climate change. In fact, although climate change does get a mention, the main theme is the exploitation of women. This too is a worldwide problem; there is scarcely a country in the world where some form of exportation of women does not occur and that includes here! For that reason, the title of their theme is “Am I Being Unfair to You?”

Although organised and led by women, this is essentially a day of prayer for everybody, demonstrating our solidarity with our sisters and brothers in other countries and all are welcome to attend. For further information, call the Romney Marsh Benefice Office on 01797 363663.

Many blessings to you all, **Revd. Julie**

---

**Engulfed by God’s love like a wave because of you…**

But still the son felt like a long shore on which all the waves of pain of all the world were beating. His father drew near to him and said, ‘There is only one shore long enough for that. Upon My love, that long, long shore, those waves are beating now; but you can be one with Me. And I promise you that there shall be an end, and all tears shall be wiped from off all faces’.

I am truly grateful for all the love and support I have received while away due to stress at work. It has been a difficult time, but the kindness that has flooded our home like a wave of love has meant that we have as a family felt cared for by all the surrounding communities. I look forward to being among you again as we journey in to the future with Christ and each other.

My humble thanks. With love in Christ, who is our Saviour and our friend.

**Revd. Julie**
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Following the success of last year, we once again repeated the Christmas dinner event, made extra special with the help of professional Chef Michael Moore.

Whilst crackers popped, Michael and his sister Sarah, a caterer, served up a truly splendid Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. This was followed by Christmas pudding and Sarah’s speciality, berry and chocolate roulade. Whilst coffee with mints were being served the diners were invited to take part in a quiz and surprisingly there were quite a few right answers, not to mention a little cheating going on!

After singing and joining in with the Twelve Days of Christmas, which was quite a performance, it was time for a ‘calming’ closing game of pass the parcel.

As we sent the diners home with Christmas cake and chocolates in hand, there wasn’t any doubt that everyone had thoroughly enjoyed good food, drink and finally ‘good company’. Some were even booking for 2017.

We would like to thank our sponsors for this year’s lunch, who include Sainsbury’s of New Romney, Firmagers Undertakers; Gail Fynnes; Tesco’s of Dymchurch and Spar’s at Greatstone. To you all we say a huge thank you. You brought smiles to the faces of those who otherwise would have eaten alone.

The Christmas cakes that Spar sponsored were made by a young lady Katie Ilett, who is just starting up her own business. We recommend Katie very highly for your special cake needs. Ours looked as lovely as they were to eat with sumptuous fruit cake and topped with decorative Christmas icing. Contact Katie by email: katie-ilett16@live.co.uk tel: 07342 964516

Our final thanks go to Michael and Sarah who volunteer their services free of charge and for which we are truly blessed. Carol Downs
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Email: happyfeetnow@hotmail.com
“Winter is a time for comfort, or good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand, and for a talk beside the fire: it is time for home.”

*Edith Sitwell*

OUR thoughts go back to Christmas, a wonderful celebration with carols, candles, flowers, and a dinner in the Church Hall. “Thank you” to everyone who came to take part.

We now look forward to fellowship and friendship in February and the rest of the year – SO…….

**SPECIAL DAYS IN FEBRUARY**

February 2nd  Presentation of Christ in the Temple; Candlemas – take down the nativity set.
February 6th   Accession of Queen Elizabeth II  1952
February 11th Lunar Eclipse
February 12th  Education Sunday
February 14th  St. Valentine’s Day XXXX
February 26th  Transfiguration Sunday
February 28th  Shrove Tuesday

**ALL SAINTS CHURCH** fund raising events in **February:**

1. **Saturday 4th:** **JUMBLE SALE**  10.00am in Church Hall
   Bring Jumble to hall after 8.30am. Refreshments
   Tombola. 50p entrance

2. **Saturday 18th:** **PANCAKE COFFEE MORNING** in Church Hall
   10.00am. Entrance 50p – pancakes by donation!

3. **Monday 27th:** **WINE TASTING AND QUIZ** in Church Hall.2.30pm
   Remember last year? A good afternoon’s entertainment.
   Tickets and details from Caroline Berry.

**DATE FOR YOU DIARY:**

Saturday 18th March: **QUIZ and PLOUGHMAN’S**
Saturday 4th June: **GRAND AUCTION.** Start saving lot for bidders!!

“Every gardener knows that under the cloak of winter lies a miracle…. A seed waiting to sprout, a bulb opening to the light, a bud straining to unfurl. And the anticipation nurtures our dream.”

*B. Winkler*

May God’s blessings be with us all.

*Pauline Moses*
FOR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL

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Tel: 07749 508221   email: hallbookings@ivychurch.org.uk
THANK YOU to everyone from our community who joined us for our first Benefice Carol singing on the 10th December in Dymchurch. It was a great night, not too cold and, after much prayer, the rain kept off too! Twenty-two adults, 4 children and a dog enjoyed visiting the Old Rectory Residential Care Home where some of the residents were happily joining in with the carols and enjoyed talking to the children and of course the dog! We moved on to Romney Marsh House where we sang in the lobby as most residents were already engrossed in their regular Bingo night in the main lounge! We continued round Orgarswick Avenue, where residents came out to speak to us and wanted to give a donation to church funds (I don’t think it was to move us along!). We then continued to the Christmas tree in central Dymchurch and finished at the Ocean Inn where we serenaded Christmas diners and once again given a donation towards Church funds. All in all, it was a special evening anticipating the birth of our Saviour. Special thanks to Andrew and Gabrielle Parry from Burmarsh church who ably led the singing. We look forward to welcoming you all at the Benefice Carols this year (date & venue to be decided)! Janet Haskell

**ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH AT DYMCHURCH**

The Sunday when the 10:30am Service is Unity in Worship, there will be an additional service of a said Holy Communion at 9:00am according to the Rite of the Book of Common Prayer. In January, this will be on the 29th as it is not a Benefice Service.

These follow-on February 26th March 26th (Mothering Sunday) and April 23rd. We have listened to those who are asking for a Service of Holy Communion on the fourth Sunday of each month in Dymchurch as well as those requesting that it should be from the Book a of Common Prayer. This will be reviewed in April to see what the take up is in terms of people present and a decision then taken as to its future viability. Revd. John Richardson
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“Put the gleam back in your oven!”
Book Sales for the 
Friends of St Nicholas 
The Next Book Sale will be 
Saturday 18th February 2017 
10.00 - 12.00 noon 
St Nicholas Church New Romney

February 2017 will be the start of our fourteenth year of Book Sales how things have grown! At the beginning, in 2004, we had a few boxes of books and served coffee to a handful of loyal supporters in the cold (and often flooded) Tower. We also had to store the books in the dreadful old kitchen.

Now we are a bit better organised – the books are stored in the back pews and we have a great team of helpers providing coffee, cakes and live music as well as setting up and clearing away.

So, we have decided (by popular request!) to continue expanding and for 2017 to have a go at selling DVDs. We will start this in March so please keep us in mind if you are “tidying up” your collection – more details in next month’s Magazine.

Over the winter, we have sorted out our stock of books so we will be hoping for donations to fill the gaps. Usually a lot of books arrive in February so it is a great help if they are brought on Friday afternoon; we can then get ahead with the sorting. Thank you everyone for your support last year.

If you have books to donate: - Please bring them to the Church on Friday 17th February 2-4 pm or give us a ring and we will collect them locally.

Liz Skilbeck 01797 367727

DURING December, members of the Benefice Ministry Team were welcomed at Dymchurch, New Romney and Brenzett Junior Schools and had great fun during afternoons of creative prayer with some of the children. The six prayer stations included tea light candles, writing 'sorry prayers' which were then joyfully consigned to the shredder and, creating small paper prayer chains which were subsequently all joined together as one chain, linking the three schools and their prayers. This chain of prayers then graced the Christmas Tree at St. Peter & St Paul, Dymchurch through the Christmas season.

The picture depicts some of the children's 'post it' note prayers, together with the prayer chain from St Nicholas School, New Romney. The experience was humbling and provided treasured memories.

Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." Mathew 18:3

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Figures may vary depending on driving style and conditions.
CHURCH SERVICES: Services are back to normal this month with Holy Communion at 5pm on Sunday 12 February and Sung Evensong from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer at 6.30 pm on Sunday 26 February.

THANK YOU: In December, Ivychurch PCC held a thank you tea party for former village resident Peter Hawkins who recently moved to Dorset. Peter was on the PCC for about 10 years and also served as Captain of the Tower. As a former bell ringer he knew rather a lot about tower matters. Along with Brian Donnelly and John Hendy, Peter formed the church’s Fabric Committee and, using his expertise as a former museum director, led the team during the 2004 restoration of the North aisle. Peter was presented with a watercolour of Rye by local artist Alan Luff in recognition of all he has done for St George’s. (image by John Hendy)

RESTORATION WORK AND INSTALLATION OF NEW FACILITIES AT ST GEORGE’S CHURCH: Work has started on the restoration of the West Window and installation of kitchen and toilet facilities. Follow the progress of the works on Twitter @IvychurchRestor and www.facebook.com/RestorationIvychurch

FUND-RAISING MINI-OLYMPICS: A children’s sponsored event in aid of the upgrading of play equipment on the village green is planned for 11 February. Further information will be circulated around the village in due course. Your support and sponsorship of our young people will be very much appreciated.

CAROL SINGING: Congratulations to Mark and Vanda on achieving 10 years as publicans at The Bell Inn and thanks to them for once again providing the annual Christmas carol singers with warmth and refreshments at the end of their round! The carol singing raised a magnificent £250 for Crisis at Christmas. A big thank you to all singers, including our youngest carol singer Alex, and to villagers and pub clientele, who so generously donated.

MOBILE LIBRARY AND POST OFFICE: The mobile Post Office is in the village every Tuesday, 1 pm - 2 pm, while the mobile library calls there on alternate Tuesdays, 3:40 pm - 4:10 pm. February library dates 7th and 21st. Tea, biscuits and convivial chat are simultaneously available in the village hall, making the Ivychurch library stop one of the most successful in Ashford’s Mobile Library Circuit!

MIKE BARTLETT’S IVYCHURCH NEWS LIST: If you would like to be on Mike Bartlett’s email list to receive Ivychurch news alerts (or if you think you may have accidentally dropped off his list) please email Mike on bridgehouseassociates@btopenworld.com.

NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: This will take place in the village hall on Thursday, 16 February, 19:30. All welcome.
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BENEFICE REGISTERS

FUNERALS
13/01/17 at Dymchurch, Edwin Bertram Ralph (Eddie) aged 90
25/01/17 at Charing Crematorium, Gordon Barton, from New Romney, aged 91

MID-WEEK SERVICES

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<th>St Nicholas New Romney</th>
<th>9.30 am</th>
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<tr>
<td>All Saints St Mary’s Bay</td>
<td>9.00 am</td>
<td>each WEDNESDAY morning</td>
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<td>SS Peter &amp; Paul Dymchurch</td>
<td>9.30 am</td>
<td>each THURSDAY morning</td>
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EVENING PRAYER

- Dymchurch Tuesday and Wednesday at 5.30 pm
- New Romney each Thursday at 5.30 pm
- St. Marys Bay each Friday at 5.30 pm.

BENEFICE HEALING SERVICE ~ SUNDAY 19th FEBRUARY
at 6:30 pm in St. Nicholas Church, New Romney

We shall be using the Order of Service used by
The Burrswood Community at The Church of Christ the Healer.
The service is based around the Burrswood Prayer...

In His
Name we pray,
Come Holy Spirit
Heal our lives,
Renew our faith
Inspire us all, to
Serve you glad
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Life in the psalms

ALL SAINTS – St MARY’S BAY ~ WEDNESDAY’S 6pm to 7.30pm
February 15th – Suffering

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EDWIN BERTRAM RALPH
3 December 1926 – 20 December 2016

Many of you will have known our father as ‘Eddie’ but those of you who remember him from his New Romney days will have known him as ‘Bert’. This was to distinguish him from his father Edwin James Ralph or ‘Ted’ who was known as the whistling postman on Romney Marsh.

Eddie passed his 11+ and was very proud to have gone to Harvey Grammar School. Due to the war Dad finished formal education early; however, he always continued to learn. He read a great deal and mostly non-fiction.

Eddie married our mother, June Wilson, in 1951 and they made their home at 14 Mitcham Road in Dymchurch. Eddie worked for the Post Office and also whistled a great deal. Often when walking back from Dymchurch Primary School, we would hear someone whistling and our immediate reaction was to look up a telegraph pole and, sure enough, Dad would be up there mending the wires. As technology advanced, Dad’s expertise expanded into electronic communications, involving him in the highest level of security clearance working with BT.

Eddie was Churchwarden at Dymchurch for a number of years, and church life became the focus of their social network. Even in later years, we were often surprised to learn how many Harvest Suppers Dad had managed to attend!

June died in 1998 and Eddie felt the loneliness deeply. We were all delighted when he married Millie Saffery and after their marriage in 2002, Dad lived with Millie at St Mary in the Marsh. You may have been on Eddie and Millie’s round for delivering Marsh Matters.

Only two weeks before he died, Eddie celebrated his 90th birthday with a party at The Star Inn at St Mary in the Marsh. He was a loving husband, a wonderful father and a caring and fun Grandpa. He will be remembered as a good man who was always cheerful.

Cheryl Mathieson and Sharon Francis

NB. As already mentioned, Eddie and Millie hand delivered copies of Marsh Matters since the launch in April 2015, and prior to that, distributed the Dymchurch, Newchurch, Burmarsh magazine which I took over as editor in April 2004. A very long time indeed delivering magazines in all types of weather in Dymchurch and other areas.

Eddie was one of life’s good people, caring and always ready to help out and is sadly missed Ed.
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GRANDA: Was a man of few words. However, when he spoke of his life as a young man in the Royal Navy, he enthralled my brother and I with tales of the hard, cruel life he had endured. He told us how, in bare feet and in freezing conditions, he had to scrub wooden decks with a block of pumice stone. Food was atrocious and he would eat his biscuits in the dark to avoid seeing the weevils. On his arm was a typical sailor’s anchor tattoo which he no doubt regretted and which he kept covered in his later life as a businessman.

During the First World War, he joined the army and was sent to France. Fortunately, he could drive and was therefore spared the horrors of the trenches. As an ambulance man though he saw dreadful sights which, thankfully, he refrained from recounting in detail. Recently, following my mother’s death, I was sorting through some old papers and I came across some postcards Grandad had sent to his little girl and was struck by the tenderness of his words which must have contrasted strongly with the awfulness of his daily surroundings.

My Grandparents lived in a large Victorian house in London which, as a child, I loved to visit. The cellar was huge with four rooms to explore, each filled with souvenirs and bric-a-brac gathered during his travels in the far east. There were wonderful models of boats, guns, telescopes, tools galore, a wood-turning lathe and even a full size wooden aircraft propeller.

Grandad came from a generation where nothing was wasted. I recall him picking up a nail from the pavement, taking it home and straightening it before placing it in one of the many old tobacco tins which occupied his workshop. “Waste not - want not”, he would say.

He was a god-fearing man who never used bad language. Once he described someone who was less than honest. Ferociously he said, “the mans a……………….” We waited, open-mouthed as he searched for a word strong enough to describe the bounder. Surely Grandad was not going to swear. Finally, red-faced, he completed the sentence. “The mans a monkey”, he roared. There was a collective sigh of relief.

Yet amid the apparent moral rectitude there was a largely unspoken dark secret which was alluded to rarely and then with knowing glances and a fair amount of tutting. It appears that Grandad had gone to live in Harrow with a lady usually referred to as “that woman”. He returned to the marital home after a couple of years though, even as a child, I was aware that all was not sweetness and light. Why he left and why he returned I will never know.

Following the death of my Grandmother he became obsessed with his health and the various and numerous remedies for ailments - real or imaginary. His bathroom resembled a branch of Boots. Unfortunately, someone told him that garlic was good for the heart and, not being one to do things by halves, his diet featured the intrusive allium in just about every dish, whether appropriate or not. The house reeked and his few brave visitors would leave at the earliest opportunity, gasping for breath and with watering eyes.

Grandad could never be described as a free thinker and subjects such as religion, race or politics were best avoided. Yes, he was a man of few words but most of those words were memorable for one reason or another.

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THIS MONTH’S meeting was a workshop learning how to make an interesting arrangement with twigs and very few flowers, without using oasis. The results were surprisingly diverse, colourful and effective. On February 13th, a demonstration by Trish Bashford called “Floral Fantasia” should be a meeting not to be missed, at St Mary’s Bay Village hall at 7pm for 7.30pm. Hope to see you all there.

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**THE HAYWARDIANS CHOIR:** Is a four-part harmony choir based in St Mary in the Marsh with members from as far afield as Brookland, Dungeness, Folkestone, Lyminge and even Whitfield. The choir sings a range of music, both sacred and secular, from Handel to Bob Dylan. As a non-profit making choir, our aim is to have fun and enjoy singing a wide range of music while raising money for local charities and good causes. **Our 2017 dates so far are:**

- **25th March 7:30pm** – A Night at the Musicals for the St Mary in the Marsh Project Fund, St Mary’s Bay Church Hall
- **5th August 7.30pm** – Last Night of the Proms, St Mary in the Marsh
- **2nd Sept 7.30pm** – Last Night of the Proms, Dymchurch Methodist Church
- **8th September 7.30pm** – Last Night of the Proms, Charing

The choir meets every Friday evening at 7.30pm in St Mary in the Marsh and new members are always welcome. If you would like to learn more about The Haywardians, book us for your fundraising event or you would like to be put on our mailing list, please contact the choir’s administrator on 01797 362097 or email haywardians@vfast.co.uk

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**ST MARY IN THE MARSH PROJECT FUND**

**GREEK EVENING:** Back by popular request! The Project Fund Greek Evening will be on February 4th at 7pm in the church hall, St Mary’s Bay. Enjoy a traditional Greek meal: meze starter, choice of hot main course followed by baklava. Music, dancing and entertainment all for just £15 per head. Bring your own drink. Places are limited, so please book to avoid disappointment.

**COFFEE MORNING/SECOND-HAND BOOK SALE:** The next coffee morning and book sale will be on Saturday, 11th March from 10am to 12noon in the church at St Mary in the Marsh. Entry is free. Tea or coffee and a biscuit remains £1 but we have listened to our customers at the last coffee morning/book sale in November who all insisted we weren’t charging enough for the books and so the price of a 5p supermarket-size bag of books has been increased to £1!

**A NIGHT AT THE MUSICALS:** The Project Fund trustees are delighted to present “A Night at the Musicals” on Saturday, March 25th at 7.30pm in the church hall, St Mary’s Bay. Dean Hayward and The Haywardians will perform music from West End musicals. Enjoy a Romney Marsh buffet supper and some wonderful music. Tickets £12.50 each. Bring your own drink. Places are limited, so please book to avoid disappointment. For information about any of these events or to book tickets, please phone 01797 362097 or email projectfund@vfast.co.uk

**ST MARY THE VIRGIN, ST MARY IN THE MARSH:** In the January magazine, we reported a forthcoming concert on 9th April. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, the concert has had to be cancelled.

The 2017 season of the St Mary’s Summer Concerts is still being put together but there will be three concerts this year on Saturday, 3rd June, Saturday, 1st July and culminating with the our annual “Last Night of the Proms” concert on Saturday, 5th August. Details will follow in the March magazine. **Andrew Sinden**
Please to pay your magazine subscription if you haven’t already done so. Thank you.

FOLKESTONE SCHOOL OLD GIRLS’ ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL REUNION LUNCH 2017
Saturday 25th March 2017 ~ 12.30 for 1.00 pm
At Hythe Bowling Club (Off Stade St.), Hythe, Kent
£16.00 per person
This year the Association will again host the Reunion Lunch at our favourite venue the Bowling Club in Hythe. This event gives Members a chance to meet old friends and catch up on news. This will be a very informal buffet-style occasion to give you plenty of time to chat. We do hope you will be able to join us – and bring school friends – they do not need to be members. If you can join us

Please send your cheque made payable to FSOGA
to the Secretary by 13th March 2017
Post to Jeanne Tomkins, 21 Moncrieff Gardens, Hythe, Kent. CT21 6FJ
Or, if it’s last minute, it may not be too late! Tel: Jeanne on 01303261515.
The Association is here for former pupils and staff of the Folkestone School for Girls, including the former Technical, Grammar and County Schools.

NEW ROMNEY OLD SCHOOL
RESULT OF DECEMBER 100 CLUB DRAW
Christopher Reynolds  £50.00
Charlotte Watkinson  £20.00
Lynda Aldridge  £10.00
Peter Thomas  £10.00
Rachel Cahill  £ 5.00
Noah Ross  £ 5.00
This is the final draw for this year 2016, thank you all who have supported us throughout the year by taking part. May I remind you that we started afresh in January 2017. There are four draws throughout the year and if you would like to renew your subscription or join us, the cost is £10. for the year. For further information please ring Sally 01797 366735

May we wish you all our best wishes for 2017 from all at the Old School (and good luck !)
Work has finally commenced on the rebuilding, of the west window. See page 9 for more details

(image John Hendy)

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ALL IN THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

IT WAS:

• 400 years ago, on 6th Feb 1617 that Prospero Alpini, Italian physician and botanist, died. He is credited with the introduction of coffee and bananas to Europe.

• 300 years ago, on 19th Feb 1717 that David Garrick, British actor, playwright, producer and theatre manager was born. He was manager of London’s Drury Lane Theatre for 29 years, and made it one of the leading theatres in Europe.

• 150 years ago, on 15th Feb 1867 that Johann Strauss’s waltz The Blue Danube was performed for the first time, in Vienna, Austria.

• 125 years ago, on 22nd Feb 1892 that Oscar Wilde’s comedy play, Lady Windermere’s Fan, was performed for the first time, in London.

• 100 years ago, on 13th Feb 1917 that the WW1 Dutch exotic dancer and courtesan Mata Hari was arrested in France and charged with spying for Germany (she was executed later that year).

• 75 years ago, on 8-15th Feb that the WW2 Battle of Singapore took place. This Japanese victory led to their occupation of Singapore until Sep 1945.

• 70 years ago, on 7th Feb 1947 that the first of the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in caves in Khirbat Qumran (now in the West Bank, Palestine).

• 70 years ago, on 12th Feb 1947 that Lord Louis Mountbatten, 1st Earl Mountbatten of Burma, became the last Viceroy of India.

• 65 years ago, on 6th Feb 1952 that King George VI died, and was succeeded by his daughter, Elizabeth II.

• Also 65 years ago, on 17th Feb 1952 that Winston Churchill announced that Britain had developed its own atomic bomb.

• 40 years ago, on 4th Feb 1977 that Fleetwood Mac released its album, Rumours. It became one of the best-selling albums of all time, selling more than 45 million copies worldwide.

• 25 years ago, on 7th Feb 1992 that the Maastricht Treaty was signed, establishing the European Union (with effect from 1st Nov 1993).

• 15 years ago, on 4th Feb 2002, that Cancer Research UK was founded. It is now the world’s largest independent cancer research and awareness charity.

• Also 15 years ago, on 13th Feb 2002 that the former mayor of New York City, Rudolph Giuliani, received an honorary knighthood from the Queen, in recognition of his work following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.
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THE SHORTEST MONTH: FEBRUARY is the shortest month and also one which often seems to lack any really distinctive features. December is the month of expectations, January is the time of resuming ‘normal’ activities as even shop sales come to their end. March marks the transition to longer days, with clear signs that spring is on the way. February used to be known as ‘fill dyke’ because of the amount of rain and snow that usually fell then, an apt name when I was a child in the Yorkshire Dales. It was not unusual for over a foot of snow to fall overnight, whipped up into drifts which left one waking up to a strange greyness because the bedroom window had been covered. The local farmers would already have their tractors out, snow ploughs attached, and the sound of their big engines vibrating through thick stone walled cottages. From first light, they endeavoured to clear the essential routes. These were not main roads, as they surely would be today, nor yet even to the local railway, which got necessities into the rural communities in those days of hissing steam engines which had little problem with iced rails and ran on hand passed ‘tokens’ when iced signals failed. The priority of the farmers was always to reach livestock which they had not been able to gather into the closest fields, taking fodder and implements to smash the thick ice on water troughs. Sometimes snow drifts had formed against walls by which flocks had taken shelter. Sheep, although remaining warm under their double blanket of wool and snow, have a limited survival time when fresh air is cut off by the snow. Every available hand was called into service, plus, of course, the sensitive noses of sheep dogs which were invaluable in finding the best concealed sheep. Only when all this was done did attention turn to clearing even the most important of other routes, and eventually a well-earned rest and meal by a roaring fire.

Today, even in those northern regions, such snowfall is a rarity. Many people are glad, but I miss the special treats that snow brought: the transforming beauty of that thick white blanket, that sense of being totally cut off from the outside world, the strange, muffled sounds. The inability to get on with many normal duties gave opportunity to just stand and enjoy the incredible beauty of a snowflake, or a frozen waterfall. It was such quiet moments that led me to enjoy God’s wonderful creation. Perhaps we have lost something of great value as ‘fill dyke’ February has just become another month without much to make it stand out from any other.

Edith Martin

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ref: Jan ‘17 Edition of Marsh Matters “Desert Island Discs” article page 5
Your readers may be interested to know that the BBC produced a 45-minute documentary in 1982 shown on BBC TV. The programme was shown again in 2005 under the “Arena” series. It was a lovely documentary and I still have a video recording of it.

I enjoy your monthly magazine and articles similar to the above make it worth every penny of its sixty pence, so I say to you… Keep up the good work!
Yours sincerely, Frank George (St Mary’s Bay)

NB. Thank you Frank, and to quote Sir Bruce Forsyth, you’re my favourite! I believe the documentary you referred to is still available on the BBC iPlayer. Ed
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LENT: Figuring out how to keep a Holy Lent is challenging. Yet if we move beyond the popular conceptions and misconceptions then this season holds the possibility for real change. The Bible calls this conversion when our lives are transformed with rich and lasting spiritual growth.

The word Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word Lencton referring to the springtime of the year as days grow longer and longer, warmer and brighter. From Lent emerges a season of final preparations for those who would be baptized at the Great Vigil of Easter. The whole Christian community highly invests in walking alongside those who are about to commit their lives in following Jesus Christ as Friend, Saviour and Lord.

As time passes this season takes on extra layers of meaning. Today many people associate Lent with listening for a deeper awareness of their own position before God of being restored in His image by His grace. We constantly fall short of the ideals God has set for us. So, the need for ongoing repentance is followed by His forgiveness and amendment of life as daily requirements in our lives.

That said, joy in the new life we have found in following Jesus should never be overwhelmed by the struggles to live out that faith.

Lent is that opportunity to deepen our spiritual lives. We step back and consider the ways we are to repent, to turn around, to be converted, to be transformed and to grow.

During Lent as individual Christians and as a Church community within the Body of Christ we consider our spiritual health. We ask ourselves some relevant questions.

How are we living out the Gospel in our lives? At home? At work? In our friendships and relationships and with our neighbours?

What impact will this have on our street, neighbourhood, village, town, county or nation?

What areas of spiritual growth and renewal should we celebrate with joy and gratitude?

In what ways do we fall short, grow stagnant or cold hearted or even fail to love God, our neighbour or ourselves by embracing God's gracious encounters of love and new life?

As Lent approaches and moves on, for all of us personally and together. And as a Benefice Family we are providing OPTIONS for you to consider and take up by joining us......

ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS at 7:00pm in St Peter & St Paul Dymhurch for one hour only. A LIGHT ON MY PATH. A WALK THROUGH THE PSALMS...

Starting March 8th for 5 weeks.
March 8th Ships on the Stormy Seas. Psalms 1-41
March 15th A Time to Weep and A Time to Laugh. Psalms 42-72
March 22nd Denying and Covering Up the Darkness. Psalms 73-89
March 29th The Poetry of God's Reign. Psalms. 90-106
April 5th The Ultimate Vocation. Psalms 107-150

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GREATSTONE WI

On February 13th, we will be entertained by Alan Haines on Mad Musicians etc. at our usual venue, St Peter’s Hall, Roberts Road, Greatstone from 7.30pm. Visitors are always welcome to our meetings. Our competition will be for a Heart – the choice is yours. At this meeting members who were unable to attend in January can pay their subscription of £39 per year. More members are required and welcome as we are a very friendly and varied age group.

An important annual event is our Pancake competition which will take place at St Mary’s Bay Village Hall, Tues. 28thFebruary. This will be open for all WI’s in the group, plus friends, from 10 am until noon. Refreshments will be served during the morning.

We will be holding a quiz on Friday 10th March from 7 for 7.30 start in St Peter’s Hall, Roberts Road, Greatstone. This is open to all and tables of 6-8 are usual at £2 per person. Bonnie Sweet

FRIENDS OF LYDD & LYDD TOWN MUSEUM

We are all back to normal now the festivities are over and, hopefully, those who have suffered with the outbreak of cold, flu or other are now fully recovered. It was a nasty outbreak.

We are starting off in February with Alan Haines who will entertain us with Mad Musicians and Crazy Dancers, we have had Alan before and he will be returning by special request. I do hope you will enjoy the evening which starts at 7.30 pm in the Hardy Hall, Skinner Rd, Lydd when we welcome visitors as well as members. If you have not already paid your subscription of £5 for the year, Maggie will be available on February 15th from approximately 7.15pm.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. Valerie Hughes

CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

Meets monthly on the second Wednesday in the month at The Assembly Rooms; Church Lane, New Romney from 10 am until noon. New members are always welcome. This association does not cater only for people who were employed by the Civil Service but is open to anybody. We pay £1.50 per person at each meeting and light refreshments are served as we arrive at 10 am.

Our January meeting, was the AGM, Barbara Harris was nominated Chairman in place of Win Owen, who has had to retire due to ill health. Our Treasurer remains the same.

The next meeting is 8th February and Len Howell will speak on ‘The Cinque Ports’ A very interesting speaker and we look forward to seeing you. Win Owen

WHIST & SCRABBLE - Continue to meet every Friday at St Peter’s Hall, Roberts Road, Greatstone from 2 – 4 pm, We have space for more players and it would be encouraging to see more people attending these games afternoons, so why not come along and give us a try?
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ON behalf of the members of the Rotary Club of Romney Marsh I would like to say a big thank you to the residents of Romney Marsh for all the kind donations during our annual Father Christmas sleigh collections.

The two main charities that we are supporting this year are the Multiple Sclerosis Centre in Canterbury and the Prostate Cancer Research Charity. Also during the year we will consider requests from Youth organisations as well as our usual funding of a weekend break for Young Carers in our community.

Our thanks also go to the New Romney Scout group and the Sea Cadets at T.S. Veteran who assisted us on several evenings.

Overall this year we have collected in excess of £6,500 and our hearty thanks go to all concerned. Hopefully we will see you all again this Christmas.

Yours most sincerely Denis Wimble (President (Rotary Club of Romney Marsh))

Rainbow contact Joan Duckworth 01303 872513

NEW ROMNEY METHODIST CHURCH
Coffee morning held every Saturday in the church hall 10 am – 12 noon (March – Dec.). Stalls include cakes, jams, pickles, vegetables, flowers & crafts. A warm welcome awaits you at these coffee mornings and also at our worship service on Sundays at 10.30 am
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ROMNEY MARSH WALKING SOCIETY WALKS FOR FEBRUARY

All are welcome on our walks, including accompanied children. No dogs allowed though! Everyone walks at their own risk.

**Saturday 4th February - 10 am** - Meet at The George, Lydd. Car park at rear. 4 mile walk. TN29 9AJ map ref TR041209

**Sunday 12th February - 1 pm** - Meet at St Mary’s Bay Village Hall, park in Jefferstone Lane. 4.5 miles. TN29 0SW map ref TR089275

**Saturday 18th February - 10 am** - Meet at The George, Lydd, car park at rear. 4 mile walk. TN29 9AJ map ref TR041209

**Sunday 26th February - 10 am** - NB morning walk on a Sunday. Conningbrook Hotel, Kennington. 4 mile walk, carvery lunch available after the walk. TN24 9QR map ref TR025445

**Saturday 4th March.** As 4th February.

BRENZETT & DISTRICT WI

We welcomed the New WI Year on Monday 9th when Suzie Middleton, a former Met. police officer, has trained as a beautician, told us about natural and herbal remedies. She talked about the scores of chemicals, in every day products, that we apply to our head and body on a daily basis. We were encouraged to make inhalers with simple essential oils such as thyme and tea tree, which are as efficacious and cheaper than branded products. Suzie now sells Neals Yard products and we sampled lots of wonderful smelling lotions and potions, creams, salves and throat sprays and learned that "if it's a bump it's Arnica and if it's a graze it's Calendula". Some members made up their own linen sprays with their favourite essential oils, when sprayed on your pillow, promise a restful night's sleep.

The session was rounded off with an olfactory test: we had to blind sniff three essential oils and there were prizes of lovely Neals Yard shower gels, hand creams, and body lotions for those who got them right. A relaxing and fun evening.

Garden Group members were handed out their annual quiz and the winner will be announced at their first meeting of the year early February.

Do join us at our next meeting on 13th February when Traci Powers from KAB will talk about eye health, 7.30pm start at Brookland.

Contact Gill McFarlane on 01797 344297 for details.
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OUR DECEMBER meeting was our usual bring and share buffet and Christmas quiz at the Old School. We had a wonderful selection of Christmas food with nothing duplicated!

The quiz must be getting easier because lots of people did really well! They answered questions about history and anniversaries coming up in 2017. We have had so many festive questions in the past that this year they were not included.

Our January meeting took place on Monday 16th January which was a change of date. It was at the Old School in New Romney and was the AGM (report to follow).

After the AGM, our past Chairman Terry Hayes gave a short talk to the group about his pens and brought along some fine examples. The art of writing with a fountain pen is disappearing to some extent but beautiful pens bring back precious memories and words seem more special when written with a flowing hand in ink on parchment.

Our February meeting will take place at the Old School, New Romney on Monday 27th February, starting at 7-30pm. It will be a talk by John Hendy on the Folkestone - Boulogne passage. John's talk was specially requested by members at our AGM last year as some people had missed it when he spoke to the society before. It is highly recommended and both members and visitors are welcome to attend.

Further information about the society can be found on our Facebook page or by e-mailing Gaynor at g7.cobb@gmail.com.

Gaynor Cobb

A FEW ADULT TRUTHS

- Nothing is worse than that moment during an argument when you realise you're wrong.
- Sometimes I'll look down at my watch 3 consecutive times and still not know what time it is.
- I keep some people's telephone numbers in my phone just so I know not to answer when they call.
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VIEWING OF THE FILM, ‘THE PASSION’
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Further information, telephone Benefice administrator 01797 363662

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● Wednesday 1st March
  7.00 pm ~ St Nicholas Church
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NEWCHURCH WI MEETING

NO ONE can have failed to be moved by the speaker at our January meeting, Dr. Gehad Homsey, as he spoke about his time volunteering for 'Mercy Ships'. This is an international Christian charity using hospital ships to provide free surgery and medical care together with assisting local communities to improve health care, offering training, advice and materials. It was humbling to see 'before' and 'after' photos of people who had received treatment on board the hospital ship and to see how lives can literally be transformed by sometimes relatively simple operations and by procedures that we in the western world almost take for granted. Surgery on the ship includes cataracts, cleft lip and palate, childbirth injury, tumours and dental procedures. In some instances, these operations were completely life changing - restoring sight and mobility (and dignity) or simply enabling people to eat properly and not be shunned by their own families. The ships are staffed by volunteers who give their time (from 2 weeks to several years) for free. Gehad volunteered as an anaesthetist over a period of 15 years as the charity allowed him to volunteer for only 2 weeks at a time. Mercy Ships are currently working off the coast of Africa where 50% of the population has no access to a hospital or doctor. Medical services are offered free of charge to help those in greatest need regardless of race, gender or religion. Gehad is a tremendous ambassador for this wonderful charity which is funded by donations but brings lasting change to so many lives.

The competition for 'A Nautical Item' was won by Helen Artlett with a book of knots. Runners up were Paddy Elleman and Viv Peebles with a sextant and ship in a bottle.

Members reported on the various Christmas parties attended in December and names were taken for a trip to 'Remembering Fred' at the Leas Cliff Hall, in May. Gill had visited Penny Moore in her new home near Wisbech and had taken a housewarming present. Hopefully, she will soon find a WI to join - but it won't be as good as Newchurch! Our next meeting is on Tuesday 7th February at 7.30pm in Newchurch Village Hall when the speaker will be Mr. G. Haining who will be talking about the 'Black & White Minstrels'. The competition is for 'A Pair of Gloves'. If anyone would like more information about our WI, please ring Brenda on 01233 720181 or Gill on 01303 874154.  Gill Colbourne
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WOULD YOU ADAM & EVE IT? - At St. Nicholas Church, New Romney, SATURDAY 4th FEBRUARY at 7:30pm - Tickets can be booked by phoning John Richardson 01303 980027 £10 per person or you can pay at the door.

WOULD YOU ADAM & EVE IT? - Shows what happens if you tell two chaps who like to make people laugh dramatise all 90 chapters of the first two books of the Bible. With a few strategic bits to help it achieve a 90 minutes running time it has amazed audiences around the world for the last 9 years including the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

This show is being toured in partnership with the Bible Society and Romney Marsh Benefice has been one of the first places to be selected to pilot this new production. They believe that when people engage with the Bible that lives can, and are, and do change and transform for good. The show caters for anyone aged 10 or over.

This is Searchlight's second visit to Romney Marsh following their successful debut in Dymchurch in July 2016 to a large audience with their Window on Coward and Novello which played to two audiences.

And book now the date of their third visit. On PALM SUNDAY APRIL 9th, again in St. Nicholas, Church, New Romney at 3:00pm when they invite us to take A DONKEY RIDE TO PARADISE. John S. Richardson. 01303 980027

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CLUBS OF INTEREST

NEW ROMNEY "65" CLUB - Meets each Monday 2 pm to 4 pm - Prescott House, Rolfe Lane. We are a friendly club who enjoy playing various card games and bingo. The only requirements to join are that you are retired. Tel: Pat Beard 01797 363985

NEW ROMNEY CRAFT GROUP - Meets each Tuesday 7 pm to 9 pm Old School Trust, New Romney - Rita 01797 367457 or Ann 01797 362020

ST MARY’S BAY COMPUTER CLUB - Meets each Wednesday 10 am to 12 noon, 1:30 to 3:30 pm St. Mary’s Bay, Village Hall. You don't have to sign up for a whole course, but for whatever length of time you like. Tel: 01797 362397 - 01797 321096

MATURE MOVERS FITNESS CLUB FOR THE OVER 50’s - Meets each Monday at 10.30am at the Romney Marsh Day Care Centre, Rolfe Lane Tel: 01797 363888

COUNTRY MICE NEEDLECRAFT CLUB - Meets each Wednesday 7 pm to 9 pm Old School Trust, New Romney. Tel: Nina Miller 01797 363417

ST MARY’S BAY CAMERA CLUB - Meets each Thursday 8 pm Sept to mid-May, St Mary’s Bay village hall Jefferstone Lane. Anyone interested in all aspects of photography (including smartphones, point-and-shoot, 3D photography and image manipulation in computer software) welcome. Contact Paul on 01797 458646, smbcc@onetel.com or website www.stmarysbaycameraclub.co.uk

ALZHEIMER’S SOCIETY - If you have dementia, or are caring for someone with dementia, come along to your local café at Old School, New Romney TN28 8ES. We meet on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month 10.30 12.30 08450 405919.

NEW ROMNEY BOWLS CLUB - Meets each Friday 7:30 pm Sussex Road, New Romney. Short Mat, Bingo, Quizzes and Entertainment. New Romney Bowls Club can offer all these things if you become a social member. With group holidays, horse racing evenings, special meals there is a host of social activities. Call Derek on 01303 870977. Every first Wednesday of the month we have an OPEN MIC EVENT hosted by Bill & Ted, at New Romney Bowls Club. A warm welcome awaits.

SHORT MAT BOWLING – Come and give it a try in St Marys Bay Village Hall. We meet Sunday mornings at 10.30am, Tuesdays 2pm and Wednesday evenings at 7pm. Telephone Richard on 01797 363077 or just turn up.

DYMCHURCH ART SOCIETY - Meets every Tuesday afternoon 1pm to 4pm at the Peter Sloper Room Dymchurch Village Hall. We are a friendly like-minded mixed ability art group; we have a few empty easels we would love you to fill. Call in for a chat and a cuppa and see us in action. Anne on 01303872049.

DYMCHURCH SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB - Meet Tuesdays and Thursdays at Dymchurch Village Hall 6.00 pm for 6.15 pm. We are currently full and a waiting list is now in force. Telephone Margaret 01797367183 or Brenda 01233720181

CARM MEETING POINTS: DYMCHURCH– Each Monday 10am -12 noon in the Methodist Church Hall – COASTAL– Each Tuesday 10 -12 noon in St Peter’s Church Hall, Greatstone. A warm welcome and a chance to meet new friends over a cuppa, games, regular activities and talks of interest More details phone the CARM Office on 01233 758122
A THANK YOU LIST: Our lovely eight churches here on the Romney Marsh Benefice would scarcely function without the love and support of its unpaid helpers. Very often they can be taken for granted, not intentionally I’m sure, but nonetheless it does happen. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking each and every one of them for their brilliant contribution towards church life and keeping our wonderful churches running smoothly. Thank you all very much. Ed

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- And all those I may have forgotten!

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