

Alkham Monthly Newsletter

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CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTS - Thanks to everybody who came for the Village Christmas Tree lights switch on. In spite of the weather, it was amazing that nearly 100 turned up to watch five-year-old Phoenix do the honours. A big thank you also to Darren Healey, the new owner of the Marquis, for providing refreshments and outlining their plans for the future. Well done to Louise, Nadine, Hailey and the rest of the Marquis staff who coped brilliantly with the

incredible turn out. Our thanks also to Ken and Gordon Spencer who made sure that Father Christmas arrived safely and to Brian Wimsett and his Alkham Fund who supplied the new lights. **Den Barnard**

SLADDEN FARM ON TV – Di Smith, who runs Sladden Farm, will appear on the BBC in January. She took part in a programme called ‘The Farmers’ Country Showdown’ which is billed as a heart-warming series that celebrates inspirational farming families and the rural events where they showcase their hard work, as they try to win the top prizes. The BBC spent a whole day with Di at her farm, just to the east of the village, where she has her Dexter cows and they also filmed at Shakespeare cliff where her animals also graze. The programme is not yet scheduled but should be shown in January or early February. **editor**

PARISH PLAN UPDATE – VOLUNTEERS - The Parish Plan is now entering a crucial phase of its development. Analysis of the open day results is well underway with the production of a master spreadsheet. This document will allow the team to identify key actions and list them under priorities and types of action. This is the evidence phase of the Parish Plan. There is much essential work to be undertaken on the identified actions to ensure the credibility of the plan. The work will require further research and consultation, and the Parish Plan team are seeking community volunteers to join various sub working groups to carry out this important work. If you want to volunteer, please submit your name to the Parish Clerk (see back page). Many thanks. **Martin Hibbert**

CLASSIC FILMS - Over a period of 10 days in December 7 classic 1950’s film were shown at the Village Hall. The showings were free and attended by a core of enthusiastic film goers. The films ranged from musicals like ‘Singing in the Rain’ to classics like ‘Genevieve’ and ‘Some like it Hot’. Those who came enjoyed the experience of revisiting their memories of films from their past. **Geoff Hillier**



TEA AND A CHAT – There won’t be a Tea and a Chat in December but there will be one as usual on January 31st at 2.00pm. If you haven’t been before, please do come a long as it’s a very pleasant way to spend a couple of hours with good company.

ANOTHER great Poppy Appeal - £820.66 - from Alkham and Ewell Minnis residents, who gave so generously in this Centenary year. Thanks to The Marquis, Alkham Tea Rooms, Alkhamhurst Kennels, Southern Equestrian and Alkham Valley Community Project, that had Poppy Boxes. And a special mention to the Garden Centre who also donated the money they received from their charity book shelves. Thanks also, to Shirley Prince for providing the wreath for the Remembrance Service at the church. Finally, to the collecting volunteers – **Rachel Fountain**

DOMESTIC OIL thefts are still happening as a property in Ewell Minnis had some oil taken recently.

FILM NIGHT

There is no film in December

Jan 29	King of Thieves Michael Caine - Ray Winstone
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Village Hall 7.30pm
Please bring your own refreshments

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ALKHAM PARISH COUNCIL has increased the 2019/20 precept level this year by an average of £0.27p per week per household. In determining the budget and precept the Parish Council has set the priority projects it wishes to achieve against the current and future finances of the Council. The precept has not been increased significantly for many years. Indeed, for the last two financial years, the Parish Council's expenditure was greater than its income. The overspend is taken directly from reserves. Savings have been made where possible, with many budget items reduced by a small % to try and limit the increase in Precept for 2019/20, without having a dramatic impact on village services. The Parish Council will seek grants and external funding for projects before reserves are spent. A critical factor in the increase in precept has been the non-availability of Kent County Council and Dover District Council funding for projects such the Parish Plan and the Traffic Implementation Group. Also, the increased administrative costs due to greater legislative requirements for Parish Councils. The Alkham precept proposed for 2019/20 is £ 12,500, which when divided by the tax base of 307.61 Band D equivalent houses within the parish, results in Parish Council Tax figure of £ 40.64 for the year or £0.78 per week. This equates to an average annual increase per household of £14.17 on last year's figure of £26.47. The Parish Council are always reluctant to increase the Precept but hopes that residents will feel that the increase will be beneficial. Alkham continues, deservedly, to be a very popular parish, because of its vibrant community and excellent facilities. The Parish Council is seeking to do everything in its power to make sure the village continues to be a good place to live. **Neil Burrows Chairman**

ST ANTHONY'S CHRISTMAS TREE - On behalf of Rev Brian, the PCC and all who worship and visit this beautiful old church, we would like to offer our appreciation and thanks to Paul and Ian at the Alkham Garden Centre for providing, once again, a beautiful tree. **Irene Barnard**



PLANNING APPLICATION – The boundary of the parish of Alkham stretches to Hawkinge and the Parish Council were asked their opinion regarding the erection of 19 dwellings on the land shown by the arrow. With reservations, they approved as do the Planning Department.

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BYWAYS - KCC wishes is to keep the byways open and not to close them unless they are badly damaged, but the Parish Council would prefer seasonal TRO's and report damage as necessary. However, the Parish Council accepts that the decision lies with KCC.

ALKHAM WI had their Christmas meal on the 11th December at the Marquis, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Our next meeting will be on the 8th of January when our speaker will be Jo Murrell talking about the Alkham Valley community project.

DOVER COLLEGE - Do you have a child due to start Reception in September 2019? Here at Dover College we believe our Reception class offers the best start to education but don't just take our word for it, see for yourself at our Reception Entry Open Evening on Thursday, 10th January at 6pm. To book call 01304 244523 or jsadmissions@dovercollege.org.uk (free newsletter entry for local school)



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ALKHAM'S OAK TREES – In the February 2018 edition of the Newsletter there was an article about Stonehill wood, which is at the junction of Slip Lane and Chalksole Green Lane in Alkham. In March 1772 the standing oak trees in this wood were sold at an auction in the Fox and Goose pub next to the present-day Marquis. In 1793 the Napoleonic Wars began, and this brought increased prosperity to Dover partly because of the increase in ship building. The King shipyard at Dover was the only commercial ship builder but there were other shipyards around and they saw an increase in orders from the government. The keels were laid down on the beach and the ships were mainly built out of locally grown oak from woods or forests that surrounded Dover at Alkham, Elham, Lydden, Lyminge, Temple Ewell and Whitfield and it is quite probable that the oak trees from Stonehill wood were used in these ships to fight the French. A ship required about 40 acres of woodland to build and Stonehill would have provided around 9 acres. One ship, The Zephyr, was built at Dover in 1795 and cost £2,660, which in today's money is £380,000; today a frigate costs about £70 million to build. The maritime information came from doverhistorian.com, which is an excellent site with a lot more information about Dover. **Brian Wimsett**

OZ on CABBAGES – Recently I received a very funny but alarming report on Facebook that went as follows: “Pythagoras’ Theorem is 24 words long. The Lord’s Prayer: 66 words. Archimedes’ Principle: 67 words. The Ten Commandments: 179 words. The US Constitution with all 27 Amendments: 7,818 words. The EU Regulations on the Sale of CABBAGES: 26,911 words. This says it all.” I thought this a wonderful piece of invective, but was wary – were the numbers correct? – why did cabbages require 26,911 words of regulation? So I checked out the word counts, and the first five were acceptable, after allowing for variations in translation and editing. However, in references to EU cabbage regulations, the numbers varied wildly, with a preponderance of the number 26,911. This number dates back to World War II, long before the EU, let alone their cabbage regulations. According to Professor Barry O’Neill of the University of California, the US government regulated the sale of cabbage seeds in a 2,600 page report. Later it was rumoured that the regulations would be extended to include cabbage plants in a 26,000 page report. By 1951, the rumoured figure had grown to 26,911, even occurring from time to time in the US Senate in the 1980s. The story crossed the Atlantic in 1953, when a British MP used the same device, but substituting eggs for cabbages, to criticize the activities of the Egg Marketing Board. The 26,911 figure was again used in 2006 during a Lords debate on EU regulations on duck eggs. In the same year, the EU issued Regulation (EC) No 634/2006 regarding the sale of cabbages, in a report between 1,800 and 2,000 words long, but this was withdrawn in 2009 after criticisms regarding its relevance. The whole area of farm produce is now included in a single EU document of some 32,000 words. However, UK farmers still have to follow our Red Tractor Assurance Scheme’s Protocol for Cabbage, which, according to its author, Andy Richardson, has 23,501 words. Which is, I think, about where we came in – give or take. **Steve Osborn**

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Tuesday	Art Workshop from 10am – 1pm Yoga 1.10pm – 2.10pm
Wednesday	Keep Fit 9.30/10.30am - Tai Chi 6pm to 7pm
Friday	Pilates 9.30 to 10.30am – check to make sure

Other Events in the village hall

Tuesday	8	W.I. meeting 7.30pm
Wednesday	9	White Cliff Metal Detectors 7pm to 9pm
Saturday	12	SEK astronomical society 7pm to 10.00pm
Monday	14	Bird Club 7.30pm
Saturday	26	Beekeepers in the afternoon
Tuesday	29	Film Night 7.30pm – see page 1

Bus times from Alkham to Dover (top) and Folkestone (bottom)

8.00, 9.11,10.11, 11.11, 12.11, 13.11, 14.11, 15.11, 17.04, 18.34
Sat: 9.11, 10.11,11.11, 12.11, 13.11, 14.11, 15.11, 17.11, 18.41
7.32 9.32 10.32 11.32 12.32 13.32 14.32 16.27 17.32 18.32
Sat. 7.32 9.32 10.32 11.32 12.32 14.32 17.32,18.32

CHURCH SERVICES

DATE	ALKHAM	CAPEL	HOUGHAM
Sunday 6th	Evensong 4.30	Eucharist 9.30	Christingle 11am
Saturday 12 th	Messy Church St Radigund's 3.00 – 5.00 pm		
Sunday 13 th	Eucharist 9.30	Christingle 11am	
Sunday 20 th	Christingle 11am	Evensong 6.00	Eucharist 9:30
Sunday 27 th	Benefice Eucharist Capel 10.00 am		

FROM THE VICARAGE - On a train journey recently, Mrs Vicarage announced that she would like a cup of tea. So, Yours Truly duly made his way to the On-Board Shop (that's what the Buffet Car is called now) in search of refreshments. Arriving at the On-Board Shop, I stood at the counter and expected to be greeted with the usual "Can I help you?" The attendant, however, was chewing the end of a pen and puzzling over a form that she was trying to fill in. Looking up, she waved her pen towards me and asked if I could help her! She opened a flap on the machine behind her and pointed to something that appeared to contain coffee granules. She needed to order some of that - but she wasn't quite sure which box to tick. We studied the form together, ticked what we thought might be the correct box, and agreed to attach a Post-It note to explain, just in case. Then she made tea. Of course, it was flattering to think that I might have looked intelligent enough to be able to understand the form - but it made me think. It would have been easier for that attendant to have pretended to have known what she was doing and to have just ticked anything rather than ask a stranger for help. Not for nothing were Christians in medieval times taught that humility was one of the seven virtues. How often are we too proud to admit that we don't know everything? It may well be that, as you read this, that buffet car attendant is hard at work somewhere between London and the North. God bless her - not only is she honest, humble and conscientious, but she also makes a decent cup of tea...
Brian Williams

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 Footpaths antbarrier@tiscali.co.uk
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