

# PARISH NEWS

AUGUST 2020

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## **From the Parsonage: 'Consider the lilies of the field...'**

Mindfulness is advertised as a therapeutic activity, one which has expanded quite dramatically during the current crisis. It's a new name for an ancient practice. It is promoted as a tool to tackle anxiety which, if not addressed, acts as a kind of vortex that people get trapped in and which prevents them from carrying on life and enjoying it as they should. That vortex needs to be escaped from to restore health of mind and body. Drugs can be used but they have their own problems. Jesus instruction to 'consider the lilies of the field...' is an early example of a call to practice mindfulness or contemplation. It is one example of the ways in which he told people to be reflective, more contemplative about life. He was motivated by the impact of the worry and the sickness in mind and body which he saw in people's lives.

'Consider the lilies of the field...' is an encouragement for people to find a way out of their own 'worry vortex' for a moment and to apprehend their life as part of the whole of creation. Jesus asked his listeners if worry made wildflowers beautiful. Would more worrying make them more beautiful? Even when fashionably dressed and 'accessorised' – like King Solomon – does anyone approach their beauty?

That said, there's nothing more irritating than being told 'not to worry'. Placing such unrealistic expectations on ourselves or on others that we never need to do so just isn't real. Constructive worry is helpful, necessary even. However recently I've been struck by the way media coverage has focused on fear and when I've heard interviewers on Radio 4 begin with the leading question (which they should do in any form) 'It must be worrying for you...' I've found myself turning the station off.

With the curtailment of socialising, celebrations and human touch and affection it is somewhat inevitable that anxiety is likely to build, and that's without taking into account the causes for the restrictions. Contemplative or mindful activities are important tools for helping us deal with anxiety. Jesus recognised this and the need to address it as part of his preaching and enabling people to hear and receive his message and find God through Him.

*Peter Blee*

## **From the Parish Registers**

### **Roger George Cooper**

*25<sup>th</sup> March 1936 - 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020*

Roger lived with his wife Annetta in Selmeston for many years. In his younger years he was a renowned sportsman, particularly both as a bowler and high-scoring batsman on the cricket field. He demonstrated a competitive spirit, combined with a friendly, welcoming manner to all he encountered. Being very generous with his time and attention to all were the marks of a true gentleman that Roger displayed in abundance.

In his professional life he was a manager at Barclays bank where he made many friends. He was a member of Seaford Rotary Club and enjoyed the social and charitable activities for 30 years during which time he also served as president. He found great pleasure in anonymously helping others whenever he could and participated in, and contributed to, all aspects of village life. He was an extremely skilled cabinet maker, a perfectionist and always up for a new challenge. His illness (he was diabetic and underwent a double amputation later in life) revealed a person of quite extraordinary determination and drive.

Roger's faith was important to him, he attended Selmeston church every Sunday and served both as Treasurer and a member of the PCC for many years. He was affable, friendly, warm and generous. He always had a smile and will be greatly missed.

*Peter Blee*

### **Nathalie Gainsborough (nee McCance)**

*Funeral at Alciston, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020*

Nathalie, who lived at Candlemas House in Alciston, died after a short illness in June.

She was born in the village of Carmunnock, now part of Glasgow. Her father, an expert in steel alloys, was chairman of Colvilles, the major Ravenscraig steel making corporation on the Clyde.

She studied music in Glasgow and Paris and was PA to the Principal of the Scottish Academy of Music. She moved to London and worked in the office of Universal Editions, an Austrian music publisher, later taking a permanent position in the library of the Royal College of Music, Kensington.

Nathalie travelled extensively: at length in Russia during the communist period, then Botswana and later taking the train across Canada. Somehow, she still frequently managed to get up to Scotland to walk in her beloved Cairngorms. Until recently she had been a member of the St Pauls, Knightsbridge Festival Choir, travelling on several of their European tours including Finland, the Baltic States, France and Portugal.

In 2013 she married and settled in Sussex, happy to live in Alciston and near Glyndebourne, enabling her to stay in touch with opera, her lifelong passion.

*Peter Blee*

## Open Churches

The benefice churches are now open daily for private prayer. Two church services are being held each Sunday, one at either Arlington or Wilmington, the other at either Alciston or Selmeston. We warmly welcome people to attend and ask them to follow guidelines on using hand sanitiser and sitting at social distance, etc., that can be found on the website [www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk](http://www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk), where the service location and times can also be found. At present the services are Morning Prayer until Holy Communion can be offered. Please check the website.

## Church Services

2 <sup>nd</sup> August	23 <sup>rd</sup> August
11.00 am Selmeston Church	11.00 am Selmeston Church
11.00 am Wilmington Church	11.00 am Arlington Church
9 <sup>th</sup> August	30 <sup>th</sup> August
11.00 am Selmeston Church	11.00 am Selmeston Church
11.00 am Arlington Church	11.00 am Wilmington Church
16 <sup>th</sup> August	6 <sup>th</sup> September
11.00 am Selmeston Church	11.00 am Selmeston Church
11.00 am Wilmington Church	11.00 am Arlington Church

Evening Prayer: 5.00 pm at Alciston on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> August.

## Zoom Services

9.30 am every Sunday morning. To join this service please let us have your email and we will send you a link: [benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk](mailto:benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk) or telephone: 01323 811136.

These are being continued as a number of people are either unable to get to church or need to continue to shield or self-isolate.

## Berwick Church Update

Work on the fabric will hopefully be completed by the time that the Parish News is published. Scaffold has been erected in the church and the conservators have begun their work on the paintings, this will continue until the middle / end of September. We hope to allow people into the church during the week for private prayer and to hold worship of some kind this month, so please do visit. Please observe the guidance on social distancing and instructions on use of hand sanitiser. We may ask people to enter by one door and leave by the other. This is an experimental re-opening and if it proves too difficult to keep the church open to the general public in a way that is safe, we may have to review the decision.

## Schools Reopening

As we nervously come out of lock down and see pubs, hotel, shops and hairdressers re open, the focus for September now turns to schools. The Government has announced that schools will reopen with "full attendance" in September with the Prime Minister coming to the House of Commons to tell us that "primary and secondary education will recommence in September with full attendance", adding that "those children who can already go to school, should do so because it's safe".

For many parents this will be welcomed news as they worry about their children falling behind in their schooling but for others this announcement will cause worry.

The Government has been watching carefully the many other countries around the world, particularly in Europe, who have had their children back at school for months now and the evidence is clear that children are at extremely low risk of catching the virus and there have been little or no outbreaks across other parts of the world linked to school openings. To allay concerns the Prime

Minister has said the government will, “work with the sector to ensure we have a clear understanding of how to ensure minimal risk of transmission of the virus.”

School reopening are now made much easier with the relaxing of the 2-meter distancing rules in certain sectors to 1-meter and the creation of in-school “bubbles” to include whole classes so that classes only mix within their class to minimise large group contacts.

September, however, is some way off and a close eye will be kept on infection rates. Thankfully so far, with the easing of lockdown, we have not seen a spike of cases and with the ‘Track and Trace’ system working well, we can shut down local outbreaks, to minimise the impact nationally. We need to get the country moving again not just for jobs and the economy but for the mental health and wellbeing of the country. Schools returning is part of that, but it will be done as safely as possible.

*Maria Caulfield - Member of Parliament for Lewes*

## **Refugee Tales Calls for an End to Indefinite Immigration Detention**

For the past 5 years Refugee Tales (which grew out of the Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group) has campaigned for an eventual end to indefinite detention in immigration removal centres in the UK - which has affected 24,000 people per annum - asking, as a minimum first step, for a 28-day limit on detention. Last year the 56-mile group walk by scores of Refugee Tales supporters, accompanied by many people with lived experience of detention, passed through the benefice on its way from Brighton to Hastings. This year public health legislation meant that the group walk from Crawley to Winchester (planned for 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> July) had to be postponed to 2021; this however has not prevented supporters from walking individually in their own localities, sporting bright blue Refugee Tales tee-shirts, over the first weekend of July!

While doing just that, I was pleased to see in the entrances of various churches of the benefice, nice posters advertising Network Eastbourne services, and explaining how local people can help. “Our core aim” it says “is that no migrant, refugee person or family, in the Eastbourne area, should lack a just and compassionate welcome, nor the opportunity to engage with local Christians who are willing to care for them and their needs”. Unfortunately since April the Sanctuary Café could not open (on Mondays at All Souls Church) to offer a friendly place and friendly faces, but the immigration advisor from the café has continued to provide support through phone and email links with clients. The management team is working out how and when it will be possible to resume in a safe style.

Meanwhile, about 3months ago, hundreds of detainees were suddenly released into the community when the government realised that the detention centres were likely to become high prevalence spots for Covid-19. Many of those released had nowhere to live and had a “No Recourse to Public Funds” order imposed on them... so they fell into destitution. Refugee Tales and Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group were able to help some of them. One wonders why they were originally being held, if they could be released from the centres for public health reasons with no change in their legal status?

Finally, a poem by Prof. David Herd from the University of Kent:

*“This is just to say-  
that when a detainee  
from the Dover immigration removal centre  
applies for Bail,  
if he has a Bail Hearing –  
which he is not entitled to attend –  
though his lawyer is,  
and the Judge is,  
and a representative of the Home Office is –  
the Bail Hearing – imagine –  
is officially unrecorded.”*

More information is available at [www.refugeetales.org](http://www.refugeetales.org)

*Ruth Butlin*

## **August Gardener’s Diary**

There is lots to do in the garden this month, with the main thing being to keep certain plants well-watered in hot and dry weather. Water sweetcorn plants regularly with tomato food to get the best cobs. Continue to feed tomato plants and remove leaves lower down on the plant to help with circulation and prevent disease. Pick out the tops to leave 5 or 6 trusses per plant. Pinch out the tops of runner beans once they have reached the top of their supports. Lift onions, shallots and garlic once the foliage has flopped over and yellowed. Keep harvesting French and runner beans little and often to prevent them going to seed. Keep an eye out for potato and tomato blight and remove and destroy any affected plants.

*Keith Winter*

## Family Support Work (FSW) – Update

With the summer holidays upon us, all at FSW have been thinking hard about how we can maintain our support for families when our usual range of summer activities won't be possible. Of course a lot depends on any further easing of restrictions, but our priority is the safety and wellbeing of our families, staff and volunteers, so we are taking each day as it comes. We are hoping to replicate some online activities that have so far only been carried out in specific deanery areas and make them available to children across the diocese, but we are still working out how to make this possible!

We have welcomed staff back from furlough, although on reduced hours compared with their usual working pattern. It is great to have them back to relieve some of the pressure on staff who have been doing multiple jobs since March.

The Mothers' Union appeal has now finished but with the reopening of churches for private prayer, we are hoping that some of you will be able to recommence food collections for our foodbank. If this is possible, please be in touch with your local deanery committee member (if you have one), who will be able to give you more information about our collection dates and times in your area. If you don't know who your local representative is, please be in touch with the office on 01273 832963 or by email to [spencer@familysupportwork.org.uk](mailto:spencer@familysupportwork.org.uk) and we will be able to give you more information. Please be aware however, that we are only able to operate our van two days per week at the moment and we already have a fixed schedule in place for food collections, so it may not be possible for us to come to you.

Thank you for your continued support of all that we are doing. We greatly value your support and prayers.

June's work in numbers

- ◆ 328 (socially distanced) visits to families and 215 phone calls supporting 54 grandparents, 491 parents and 392 children
- ◆ 29 supported meetings (virtually via Zoom/Skype etc.) with other agencies
- ◆ 351 deliveries of food and other items such as children's activities made

Prayer points

- ◆ Give thanks for the recent successes with grant applications which are helping to fill some of the gaps in income that have resulted from the cancellation of events
- ◆ Pray for the families we support who have experienced redundancy since lockdown began, putting even more pressure on their home situation
- ◆ Pray for strength for our practitioners, who are having to deal with increasingly complex situations and families needing them more than ever.

*Nikki Kerr, FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing*

## Great Green Bush Cricket - The Sound of Silence

I'm a huge fan of sci-fi 'B-movies' and they don't come any better (or worse) than 1957's 'Beginning of the End'. It's the usual story: overeager government scientists' intent on increasing crop yield inadvertently create giant irradiated grasshoppers the size of double-decker buses, which set about destroying Chicago. There are some similar creatures lurking around Sussex. OK, they're not going to come stomping around Sussex any day soon but they're still mighty impressive.

The Great Green Bush Cricket can claim to be Britain's biggest insect. Yet this Godzilla of the undergrowth is surprisingly hard to see. Its long, leaf-like body blends in amongst the brambles rendering it almost invisible. Bug eyes, impressive jaws and twirling antennae give it some monster movie credentials but there's nothing to fear from this harmless native. There are about 35 species of crickets and grasshoppers (Orthoptera) in Britain. Crickets differ from grasshoppers by having much longer, thread-like antennae and they 'sing' by rubbing their wings together (while grasshoppers rub their legs against their wings). This song, or stridulation, is the male's way of romancing a female – who, if interested, will reply. The best chance of finding the Great Green Bush Cricket is to head out on a warm August evening and listen for their downland duets – a loud, incessant rattle. Imagine an enthusiastic maraca player.

I recently went for a walk through the flower-rich meadows of Sussex Wildlife Trust's Southerham reserve. I was blown away by the wall of sound created by hundreds of crickets and grasshoppers, but it became apparent that not everyone could hear this orthopteran orchestra. The sad truth is that as we get older our ears can't tune in to the higher frequencies produced by these insects and species by species they fall silent. I have a compilation CD of the chirps and buzzes of Britain's crickets and grasshoppers – a sort of 'Now That's What I Call Stridulation'. I played it this morning and track 24 had gone. It was there a few years ago but now... silence. I've started to lose my crickets. The beginning of the end. This August, get out and listen to the sounds of summer before they fade.

*Michael Blencowe of the Sussex Wildlife Trust*

## Benefice Clergy

Revd Peter Blee  
Rector of Berwick and Vicar of Selmeston with Alciston  
The Parsonage, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6SR  
Tel: 01323 870512 Email: [peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk](mailto:peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk)  
Peter's day off is Saturday.

Revd Frank Fox-Wilson - Assistant Priest  
The Vicarage, Wilmington, Polegate, BN26 5SL  
Tel: 01323 871148 Email: [frank.fox-wilson@berwickchurch.org.uk](mailto:frank.fox-wilson@berwickchurch.org.uk)  
Frank's 'on duty' days are Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

## Churchwardens

Alciston - Michèle Boys Tel: 01323 870623  
Berwick – Vacant  
Selmeston - Jan Matthews Tel: 01323 811380

## Benefice Administrator

Stephanie Lewis-Grey Tel: 01323 811136 Email: [benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk](mailto:benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk)

## Parish News Advertising and Distribution

This is coordinated by Jeremy and Valerie Shaw. Tel: 01323 811567.

## Parish News

This "digital issue" is also available on the benefice church's website [www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk](http://www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk) and Berwick Parish Council's website [www.berwickparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.berwickparishcouncil.org.uk). We are anticipating that future issues will be distributed in this way until things return to normal.

As the "digital issues" do not include advertising, we intend to include the advertisements in the printed issues until they have appeared in a full 12 month's issues.

The production team is Jane Anderson and Martin Chilvers.  
Contributions (other than advertising requests) should be sent to Martin Chilvers by the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month.  
Email: [empty.sea@outlook.com](mailto:empty.sea@outlook.com); Post: 66 Parkfield Avenue, Eastbourne, BN22 9SF.  
You should receive confirmation of receipt by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, but if not, please call him on 01323 507655.

Contributions can also be passed on to one of the coordinators:  
Jane Anderson at Old Postman's Cottage, Alciston Tel: 01323 870075.  
Valerie Shaw at Selmeston House, Selmeston Tel: 01323 811567.  
Laurie Tinsley, Wynsford, Berwick Tel: 01323 870895.

## Donations

Financial donations to the Parish News are gratefully received. Cheques payable to "Parish News" can be passed to the Treasurer, Valerie Shaw, Selmeston House, Selmeston, Polegate, BN26 6UD. Alternatively, electronic donations can be made to Barclays Bank - Account No. 70650625; Sort code 20-49-76.