

# Bepton Parish Council

## Spring 2018 Newsletter

Photograph by Beatrice Potter



### Parish Council News

Following Mr Gerry Ryan's retirement, the Parish Council is delighted to announce the appointment of Mr John Beckett. Mr Beckett lives on Bepton Road. Please note that the Annual Parish Assembly will take place at Park House Hotel on 24 May at 7.30pm.

### Bepton's Telephone Kiosk

The Parish Council has submitted to The National Lottery Awards its application for assistance in the funding of the defibrillator it plans to install in the redundant telephone kiosk. It is hoped that the Council will have news as to whether the application has been successful or not in time for the Annual Parish Assembly in May. The Parish Council would like to thank Lavinia Milner, Alex Cunningham and John Beckett for their hard work on this project.



### Paintings by Ethel Bilbrough

Does anyone recognise these Bepton locations? They were painted by Ethel Bilbrough (1868-1951) amateur artist, animal lover and writer. She wrote "My War Diary 1914-18", which is still in print. Ethel lived in Elmstead Grange in Chislehurst, Kent. At the outbreak of the First World War, she was in her mid-40s and a keen diarist and writer to national newspapers. Later Ethel moved to Wiltshire where these paintings were found and sent to us. It is not clear when, or why, she visited Bepton to paint. The paintings are marked on the back as 'Bepton, Midhurst' and one has the title 'Old Farm, Bepton'. Over 60 of her drawings and watercolours are in the Victoria and Albert Museum. If anyone has any information on Ethel Bilbrough's visit to Bepton, or the location of these paintings, we'd be delighted to hear it.

### Highways

The Parish Council is pleased to report that West Sussex County Council has cleared the culvert at Church Lane/Bughill Lane and the Cowdray Estate will clear the ditch. It is hoped that this work will ensure that there is no more flooding. However, to prevent any future flooding this needs to be done on a regular basis. Can we also remind householders to keep their drains clear of leaves and debris in order to prevent flooding. In addition WSCC has carried out some urgent carriageway repairs to Severals Road in March.

### Operation Sussex Pathwatch

If you see any illegal or irresponsible off-road vehicle activity, please report it to Sussex police on 101 or report to [www.pathwatch.info](http://www.pathwatch.info). Report the date and time, location, registration number, description of person and vehicle, and describe the incident.

### The Country Inn

The Country Inn will be holding its annual Beer Festival on 28-29 July, in aid of the Brent Lodge Wildlife Hospital. In addition to the beer, there will be a craft fair in the garden on the Sunday. If you are interested in booking a table, please contact Kathy Marshall on 01730 813466.

## News from St Mary's Church (by Sheila Ryan)

### **Looking back**

Winter is almost at an end but it is not too late to report on our pre-Christmas Carol service which is always a highlight of the year in the parish. Once again our excellent volunteers decorated the church and Christmas tree in festive style. Alan Sadler set up and made the tree secure and Lavinia Milner and Linda Sadler used their artistic skills to decorate it in red and white, carrying the red theme through the church with red candles, holly and other seasonal greenery. It was a great delight to have some young readers of lessons (supported by their fathers). Many thanks to Paul Rahim and his son William and to Abu Chinwala and his son Zubin, as well as to Brian Cox, Peter Stent and Alex and Jamie Cunningham, who all read sensitively and clearly.

### **Looking forward**

THE TOWER: In the Summer 2017 Newsletter we explained our plan to create a community space under the tower and replace the pews with chairs. St Mary's is a Grade 1 listed building so it takes time to obtain the necessary permissions before a project is started. Happily we have been authorised to do the work and this began with removal of the 8 pews. Some building work, new heating and lighting and re-decoration of the tower area are now taking place and all should be finished early in May. We are very fortunate in having had a generous response to our invitation for sponsorship of the new chairs (£198 each inc.VAT). We need 20 chairs and so far we have sponsors for 14 of them. If anyone is willing to sponsor a chair it will be much appreciated as we have used our reserves on building work (please make cheque payable to Bepton PCC and send to the church treasurer Michael Rigby at 15 Goodwood Close, Midhurst, GU29 9JG).

### **Advance Notice of June Concert**

This year we once more welcome the Wind Quintet 'A Breath of Fresh Air' led by Bepton residents Helen and Duncan Hollowood who will perform for us on Saturday 9 June at 3.30pm. Please note the date and time in your diary and plan to come along to the church to support Helen and Duncan and be entertained by their Quintet of skilled musicians. Tickets will be available shortly. Any queries please contact Sheila Ryan, tel: 01730 813971; e-mail: bayleaves@macace.net

### **St Mary, Bepton, Church Service Times**

1st Sunday of the month: 11.15am Matins (Book of Common Prayer)  
2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays: 11.15am Matins with Holy Communion (BCP)

### **Bepton Down** (Contribution from the Bepton Down Conservation Group)

Things are finally happening on Bepton Down SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). In late 2017 following a complete and thorough cut of most of the scrub on all three sections all the dead vegetation was removed. Then our local sheep farmer, Andrew Hodgkins, put nine teaser rams on the two main areas of the site where they should remain until the end of February. This should ensure a good start to the 2018 season as long as the amended management plan is adhered to.

On Friday 12th January, 2018, Matthew Dowse, Ranger for the Central Downs area of the South Downs National Park, put together a party of scrub clearers to tackle some of the brambles and other scrub on the northern most part of the Down. This is a small area which was partially reclaimed in the winter of 14/15 and was then again neglected. Unfortunately sheep cannot yet be allowed into this area as they would get entangled in the brambles.

Beatrice Potter, from the Bepton Down Conservation Group, joined Matthew, Becca, both from the SDNPA, and three volunteers to help in the clearance. Despite the rain in the morning a great deal was achieved in five hours. A number of stunted hawthorn trees complete with brambles and huge woody stems of Old Man's Beard were felled; Matthew is excellent with a chainsaw. The lower fence line was cleared of invasive scrub by Becca using a brush cutter and a fairly large area of low growing brambles was also cleared. Matthew had a huge fire going which was welcome in the prevailing conditions. This area looks a lot better than it did and it is hoped that cattle will be able to graze it and the rest of Bepton Down during the course of 2018.

I gather that Matthew is planning more sessions in the not too distant future and would welcome more volunteers from Bepton. All the tools are provided but one is advised to bring picnic items for lunch and the mid-morning break. When the dates are known these will be advertised on the notice board near the post box at the southern end of Bepton. Should anyone be interested I would be happy to hear from you and would contact you as soon as further dates are known. My email is [beatrice.potter@btinternet.com](mailto:beatrice.potter@btinternet.com).

### **The Midhurst Yellow Bus**

The Yellow Bus leaves Bepton Road/Severals at 10.39am on a Thursday and returns by 12.30pm. For further details, please go to the Midhurst Yellow Bus web site at <http://www.midhurstyellowbus.org.uk/bus>.

### **Bepton Parish Councillors**

Chairman:	Howard Ewing	07958 316 552	Lavinia Milner	817708
Vice-Chairman & Planning:	Ros Hart	815473	Alex Cunningham	817696 (Neighbourhood Watch
Clerk:	Lorraine Grocott	01428 741393	Dr Julia Wilkinson	812041 (Footpaths and Byways)
Newsletter:	Carey Bower	816738	John Beckett	813003
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