



MAY HIGH TIDES RYE HARBOUR APPROACHES

Date	Day	Time (hrs)	Height (m)	Time (hrs)	Height (m)
1	Thursday	0725	2.2	1945	2.6
2	Friday	0818	2.7	2034	3.1
3	Saturday	0903	3.1	2120	3.4
4	Sunday	0946	3.4	2205	3.8
5	Monday	1030	3.7	2250	3.9
6	Tuesday	1114	3.8	2336	4.0
7	Wednesday	-	-	1201	3.8
8	Thursday	0022	3.9	1248	3.7
9	Friday	0111	3.6	1336	3.4
10	Saturday	0203	3.2	1430	3.1
11	Sunday	0302	2.8	1528	2.7
12	Monday	0408	2.4	1630	2.5
13	Tuesday	0525	2.1	1741	2.4
14	Wednesday	0650	2.1	1903	2.4
15	Thursday	0758	2.4	2009	2.6
16	Friday	0849	2.6	2100	2.8
17	Saturday	0932	2.7	2145	3.1
18	Sunday	1009	3.0	2226	3.1
19	Monday	1047	3.1	2304	3.2
20	Tuesday	1123	3.1	2340	3.1
21	Wednesday	1158	3.2	-	-
22	Thursday	0012	3.1	1229	3.1
23	Friday	0040	3.0	1257	3.1
24	Saturday	0106	2.8	1323	3.0
25	Sunday	0134	2.6	1355	2.8
26	Monday	0212	2.5	1438	2.6
27	Tuesday	0302	2.4	1533	2.5
28	Wednesday	0409	2.1	1639	2.4
29	Thursday	0525	2.1	1746	2.5
30	Friday	0632	2.4	1852	2.7
31	Saturday	0732	2.6	1952	3.0

Add 1 hour for British Summer Time

EDITORIAL



At the last Parish Council meeting a request was made that we include the telephone numbers for the Parish Council members on the back page of the magazine. We agreed to do this but advised the Council that the back page was already rather 'busy' and that there was currently insufficient space to add the phone numbers. However some residents in the village have asked us to publish in the magazine the contact numbers for the various activities taking place in the village ie: The Tennis Club, The Bowls Club, Puppy Training Classes etc. The plan is to change the format so that the back page of the magazine gives all the necessary details for contacting members of the Parish Council, The PCSO and the District and County Councillors. The inside back page would then give details of the Village Hall Committee and the contact details for the various clubs/societies.

In order to achieve this we would be grateful if the members of the various organisations within the village could drop a note into the Editor (5 Glebe Cottages, Elm Lane) or email (denise.jordan@virgin.net) advising of the name and telephone number of the person to be contacted if anyone wishes to become a member or go along to a meeting but would like to discuss this with someone first.

Copy for the June edition can be sent to me on email at denise.jordan@virgin.net or delivered to me at 5 Glebe Cottages, Elms Lane (814187). The deadline for copy is the 15th May. Any copy you can get to me before that date would be greatly appreciated.

Denise Jordan (Ed)

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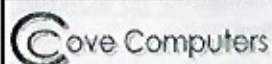
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FLOWER SHOW AGM



I am sure you will all be thrilled soppy to know that the Committee for the Flower Show has not changed much, so you can still expect the usual high standard of expertise you have become accustomed to!

The crew are:

President: Alan Parks
Vice

Presidents: Pauline Brown
Ray Barden

Chairman: Philip Wood
Vice

Chairman: Diane Crouch
Treasurer: Philippa Strickland

Secretary: Phyllis Gerreli
Minutes &

Publicity: Jacqueline Richards
Auditor: Gillian Plank

and the rest of the crew are:

Matthew Barden
Pauline Barker
Paul Brown
Jenny Crisford
Jo Johnson
with new member Norma Machin

You should now have received your copy of the schedule with the April edition of the Parish News. If you did not then further copies will be available soon in the local shops and pub.

Did you spot this year's deliberate mistake in the schedule? Yes I

thought some of you might have done. Well, for those of you who didn't, the cake recipe (Coffee & Walnut Sponge Cake) should have had a filling of:

Butter Cream

5oz(175g) unsalted butter softened
10oz (350g) icing sugar
1 level tblspn instant coffee
dissolved in hot water

Mix butter and icing sugar until light and fluffy, add coffee. Use to sandwich cake together and decorate the top adding walnut halves.

Memorabilia is starting to come in but we would like to see much more. So go on, have a good old fumble in your drawers and see what comes up. I am sure you might find that hidden treasure and we will take great care of it ~ promise.

With only three more months to go until the show, don't forget to start planting, making or preparing for your entries. Put aside any donations for the various stalls and we will be only too pleased to come and collect them.

Any committee member can be contacted and in particular Phil Wood – 813773 Phyllis Gerreli – 812699 or Jackie Richards – 815224.

J.R.



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PRAWNS

There are thousands of different species of prawn, but tiger, king and North Atlantic are the most commonly sold in the UK. They are fished in both the ocean and fresh water, and are farmed as well as wild. Most of them have a narrow tapering body, under which the tail is curled and long, and whiskery antennae. The body is encased in a brittle shell, and all types have ten legs. When raw they are bluey-grey and in the case of the smaller varieties, almost translucent.

When cooked the shells turn pink and the sweet, meaty flesh turns white tinged with pink; brief cooking is essential, otherwise the flesh will become tough. The very small shellfish referred to as shrimps are prawns too - the term shrimp just indicates their diminutive size.

Fresh prawns whether raw or cooked should smell fresh and clean; not fishy, and look moist. Avoid any that look dry or that have broken or cracked shells. If you are buying shell-on prawns, buy double the weight that you would need if using shell-off prawns.

Defrost prawns in the fridge for a few hours, and never in water as they will lose flavour. As they are sold ready-cooked, take great care if re-heating them; they must be piping hot, but don't overdo it or they'll shrivel and dry out. The three main species of **warm water prawns** available in the UK are from salt water, although occasionally giant freshwater prawns are available. Their size differs greatly, due to grading by size prior to sale. All have a dense, meaty texture and subtle flavour. Wild and farmed are available, as well as both cooked and raw - sometimes called 'green'. They are always frozen at source before transporting, so again, don't re-freeze. Best known is probably the striped tiger prawn.

Shell on prawns can't be beaten for flavour and texture. Although time-consuming to peel, they really are worth the effort and you can make great stock for risotto from the shells. At times, a shell-on prawn will have a dark green or black head - this occurs naturally due to a pressure change when the fishing nets are brought to the surface. Ready-peeled prawns are perfect sandwich-fillers.

Cold-water Atlantic prawns are sold as both peeled and shell-on. Most are cooked, then frozen. If you buy them ready defrosted, don't be tempted to re-freeze them.

Brown and pink shrimps are most often available ready-prepared and brown shrimps are usually sold as potted shrimps. They are caught and then cooked - many are frozen, but locally fresh whole or brown shrimps are available most of the year.

Recipe for Prawn, grapefruit & avocado salad overleaf

Prawn, grapefruit & avocado salad

A side or main, this versatile salad combines classic flavours with a fresh twist

400g shell-on prawns (best for flavour, although labour intensive to peel!) or 200g bag cooked large prawns, defrosted if frozen
1 medium rustic loaf, torn into big chunks
1 tbsp olive oil
2 large pink grapefruits
2 avocados
4 Little Gem lettuces
3 tbsp Thai sweet chilli sauce

Heat oven to 220C/fan 200C/gas 7 and put the bread chunks onto a baking sheet. Drizzle with 2 tsp of the oil, rub in with your hands, season, then bake for 10 mins until golden and crisp.

While the croûtons bake, cut the peel and pith away from the grapefruit, then cut out the segments, dropping them into the bowl as you go. Squeeze the juice from the heart of one of the grapefruit into a separate smaller bowl.

Peel, stone and slice the avocados and separate the leaves of the lettuce. Add to the segments along with the prawns. Whisk the sweet chilli sauce and remaining 1 tsp oil into the grapefruit juice, then season to taste. Once the croûtons are ready, cool for a few mins, then toss with the rest of the salad. Put onto plates and drizzle with the sweet chilli dressing to serve.

Do you love your Dad?



Why not send him a Fathers Day message for the 15th June through these pages. Just let us have your greetings before 15th May for our June copy. There is no charge for these messages.

THE COMPUTER SWALLOWED GRANDMA

The computer swallowed Grandma – I wish it wasn't true
She pressed Control and Enter and disappeared from view

It devoured her completely; the thought just makes me squirm
She must have caught a virus or been eaten by a worm

I have searched through the recycle bin and files of every kind
I've even used the internet but nothing did I find.

In desperation I asked Google – my search is too refined
The reply from him was negative - "nothing found on line"

So if inside your inbox my Grandma you should see
Please copy, scan and paste her and send her back to me!

When you get those 'pre-approved' letters in the mail for everything from credit cards to 2nd mortgages and similar type junk, do not throw away the return envelope.

Most of these come with postage-prepaid return envelopes, right? It costs them more than the regular postage 'IF' and when they are returned. It costs them nothing if you throw them away! In that case, why not get rid of some of your other junk mail and put it in these cool little, postage-prepaid return envelopes. Send an advert for your local chimney sweeper to American Express, they might need one! Send a pizza coupon to HSBC ... in case their canteen packs up. You get the idea.

If you didn't get anything else that day, then just send them back their blank application form ... after all, it is their form! If you want to remain anonymous, just make sure your name isn't on anything you return. You can even send the envelope back empty if you want to just to keep them guessing! It still costs them, and it is their envelope after all ... you are just returning it!!!! The banks and credit card companies are currently getting a lot of their own junk back in the post, but hey..... we need to OVERWHELM them, in order to stop them.

Let's let them know what it's like to get lots of junk mail, and best of all they're paying for it ... Twice!

Let's help keep Royal Mail busy. Since the Royal Mail are saying that e-mail is cutting into their business profits, let's help them so they will not need to increase postage costs again. You get the idea!

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LETTER PAGE



Rectory Cottage

Dear Editor,

While looking in the Toot I found a very nice blue nylon dog lead. If the owner would like to claim it, he or she is welcome to get in touch with me and give me an explanation of why the dog was off the lead in amongst ewes with baby lambs.

Avril Thurley

Dear Editor,

May we, through the pages of the Parish News, thank everyone for the lovely cards, gifts and greetings we received on the occasion of our Silver Wedding Anniversary. It really made our day extra special.

Lue and Richard Cooke

Dear Editor



With all the talk about by-gone Pett, I wonder if anyone in the village can remember the last Hayrick in Pett?

I think that the last traditionally-made hayrick was constructed at Dunlop's Farm some time in the mid to late 1970's and seem to remember it was quite an event, drawing on the help from people in the village under the supervision of Fred Vahey. I believe that photographs were taken and I would love to see one if anyone still has one.

Mrs V N Snowden

Ed: If you have any photos we could publish of this event, then please let me know.

PETT PARISH COUNCIL – PARISH ASSEMBLY

Chairman's Report

Last April Denise Jordan stepped down as Clerk, and I would like to thank her publicly on behalf of the Council for the year she spent sorting out the mess left by the previous Clerk, and for being instrumental in the appointment of the new Clerk, Bob Hodgeeson.

In May three new Councillors were elected:-

Gillian Green
Martin King
Brian Woodcock.

Planning is probably the most sensitive topic in the Village at the moment, with the Two Sawyers debacle uppermost in people's minds. In November Brian Roberts, Brian Woodcock and I attended the Rother Planning Seminar at Brede Village Hall. I questioned the Chief Planning Officer on Rother's disastrous decision over the Two Sawyers site, the illegal destruction of the Forge, and the effect on the Two Sawyers pub. Far too late in the day the Chief Planning Officer admitted Rother had made a mistake. Not much comfort for the people of Pett.

Recreation Ground.

The largest portion of our Precept is spent on the Recreation Ground facilities, and last year the Council spent £5,500 on the Pavilion external refurbishment; the first since it was built in 1964. The Play Area has had a considerable

amount spent on it as the equipment deteriorates and gets vandalised. The Council is considering replacing the main piece of equipment this coming year. The problem of the 'wet patch' from the Pavilion will hopefully be resolved when the soakaway is relocated.

Donations:

The Council has made several donations:-

Parochial Church Council £750 – upkeep of Churchyard.
Flicks Film Society £500 – new equipment
Horticultural Society – Council agreed to fund the extra cost of the 60th Anniversary Flower Show.

Recycling

Whilst most people in the village are very keen to recycle their household rubbish, Rother's launch of the scheme was completely shambolic and continues to be, with many people still waiting for lids and green waste bins one year on.

The same can be said for the recycling centre that had to be moved from the Two Sawyers. The Village Hall Committee agreed to have it on a trial basis, but Rother failed to empty the bins often enough resulting in them overflowing into the car park and the loss of the facility to the Village. Rother Love Recycling!!

Emergency Plans

A Pett Level Emergency Response Plan is now in place thanks to the efforts of Brian Roberts.

A Village Emergency Plan is also in the process of being compiled. Volunteers with emergency skills and/or equipment would be most welcome.

Police Community Support Officer

Sharon Eldridge has replaced Chrissy Locke as our PCSO. Sharon has already attended a Parish Council Meeting.

Transport

A new speed limit of 30mph has replaced the old 40mph limit at Pett Level after many years of campaigning, particularly by Brian Roberts.

The Council made representations to Eurostar, complaining about the withdrawal of rail services from Ashford to Brussels and Paris.

Parish Survey/Plan

The Council is waiting for a planning meeting with Rother officials regarding the formation of a Parish Plan. Once again we are looking for volunteers from the Village.

At this point I would like to take a moment to remember

Sheila Swaine – nee Roberts.
Sheila died tragically young last

year. She was Clerk to this Council from 1989 to 1995.

Cecily Perring who served as a Councillor from 1995 to 2001, who also died last year.

Parish News

The Parish News is the great success story of the Village. We thank Denise Jordan, the Editor; Jackie Richards, deputy Editor; Avril Thurley, distribution co-ordinator; and all the distributors. This magazine is now self-financing as its widespread distribution attracts many advertisers.

Pett Garden Club

Many thanks to the members of Pett Garden Club, and in particular Sue Dengate, for planting the daffodil bulbs throughout the village. I am sure you will agree they look stunning the daffodils!

Last but not least I would like to thank my fellow Councillors, local District and County Councillors, members of the public who turn up for Council meetings, Avril Thurley for carrying out our internal audit and helping Denise Jordan sort out the mess left by the previous Clerk, and most important of all our very efficient Clerk, Bob Hodgeeson who keeps us all in our place.

*Andrew Dunlop
Chairman
Pett Parish Council*

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FLICKS FILM SOCIETY

First of all a special thanks to Gerald Dymott, Ray Barden, Phill Button, Robert Lovejoy and Alban Mitchell who gave up their time to help install our new screen and projection facilities the other Sunday. Without their help this enhancement programme would not have been possible. We are now up and running so it is now a good time to come along and see a film you always wanted to see but for one reason or another you were unable to. All are welcome to join the Society and enjoy an evening watching a film for as little as £4.00 per show with like-minded people in the local environment of Pett Village Hall. If you wish to know more about the Society, please email me on chris@saintfamily.net or telephone on 813047. Alternatively, you can pop into the Butchers Shop in Pett and grab an application form. All films start at 7.30pm with refreshments served from 7.00pm.

Our film for **Thursday 1st May** will be **MICHAEL CLAYTON**, rated as a 15. The storyline is about a 'fixer' for a corporate law firm, played by George Clooney. His job is to stretch the truth until it fits his company's requirements, so when their top litigator Arthur (Tom Wilkinson) goes off the wall, the 'fixer' is called in to clean up. But with the whiff of corruption in the air, might he do the right thing this time? Debut director Tony Gilroy scripted the frenetic Bourne trilogy but takes it down many notches here to make a thriller for grown-ups, which oozes class yet in itself feels coldly corporate.

When Arthur strips during a meeting with U-North, a corporation accused of selling lethal pesticides (lethal to humans, that is), Clooney is called in for a spot of damage limitation. But there's method in Arthur's madness and perhaps some truth in the accusations against U-North. So, having sold his soul to the corporate devil for so long, Clooney seeks the truth as much to redeem his own life (or what's left of it after the gambling, divorce and family upsets) as to save those of others.

Corporate evil plots are nothing to write home about, but what lifts Michael Clayton are the star turns from Clooney, Wilkinson and finally Tilda Swinton's hard-ass litigator for U-North. Similarly, those in charge of cinematography, editing and music all do their job with large doses of polish.

The film for the 5th June has been confirmed and will be "**and when did you last see your father**" starring Colin Firth and Jim Broadbent. This powerful drama is about a writer seeks to bury the hatchet with his terminally ill dad but more about this in next month's newsletter.

Hope to see you on the 1st May.

Chris Saint and the Flicks Team.

PETT VILLAGE HALL
AGM
The AGM is being held on
Monday 12th May
at 7.30pm

PARISH DIARY – MAY 2008

VH = Village Hall RG = Recreation Ground

Thursday 1 st	Dance & Exercise Class	VH	9.30 am
	Flicks in the Village	VH	7.30 pm
Friday 2 nd	Latin American & Ballroom Dancing	VH	2 pm
Saturday 3 rd	Bowls v Observer	RG	2.30 pm
Sunday 4 th	Self Defence Course	VH	2pm – 5pm
Monday 5 th	Quiz Night	Royal Oak	8.30 pm
Wednesday 7 th	Badminton,	VH	10 am
	Mobile Library	Church	10.20 am
		Chick Hill	11.10 am
		Smuggler	11.45 am
	Puppy Training Class	VH	1 pm
	Advanced dog training	VH	2 pm
Thursday 8 th	Dance & Exercise Class	VH	9.30 am
Friday 9 th	Latin American & Ballroom Dancing	VH	2 pm
	Bowls v St.Leonards	RG	2.30 pm
	Railway Club	VH	7.30 pm
Saturday 10 th	Christian Aid Coffee Morning	Paxstead	10am – 12 noon
Monday 12 th	Flowerpots toddler group	VH	9.30 am
	Quiz Night	Royal Oak	8.30 pm
Tuesday 13 th	Garden Club	VH	7.30 pm
Wednesday 14 th	Badminton,	VH	10 am
	Puppy Training Class	VH	1 pm
	Advanced dog training	VH	2 pm
	Bowls v Battle	RG	2.30 pm
Friday 16 th	Latin American & Ballroom Dancing	VH	2 pm
	Women's Institute	VH	2.30 pm
Monday 19 th	Flowerpots toddler group	VH	9.30 am
	Quiz Night	Royal Oak	8.30 pm
Tuesday 20 th	Parish Council	VH	7.30 pm
Wednesday 21 st	Badminton,	VH	10 am
	Mobile Library	Church	10.20 am

		Chick Hill	11.10 am
		Smuggler	11.45 am
	Puppy Training Class	VH	1 pm
	Advanced dog training	VH	2 pm
Friday 23 rd	Latin American & Ballroom Dancing	VH	2 pm
Saturday 24 th	Bowls v Winchelsea	RG	2.30 pm
Monday 26 th	Quiz Night	Royal Oak	8.30 pm
Wednesday 28 th	Badminton	VH	10 am
	Bowls v Fairlight	RG	2.30 pm
Friday 30 th	Latin American & Ballroom Dancing	VH	2 pm
Saturday 31 st	Bowls Cup Competition	RG	10 am

If you would like your special events or regular meetings to be included in the Parish Diary, please let me have the details in writing.

Avril Thurley, Rectory Cottage

CHURCH SERVICES – APRIL 2008

Thu. 1 st May	Ascension Day – 7.30pm - Benefice Communion, St. Peter, Fairlight
Sun. 4 th May	Parish Communion, 9.30am – St. Mary & St. Peter
Sun. 11 th May	Morning Praise, 9.30am – St. Mary & St. Peter
Sun. 18 th May	Holy Communion, 8am – St. Nicholas, Pett Level
	Christian Aid Service, 9.30am – St. Mary & St. Peter [shared service with the Methodists]
Sun. 25 th May	Parish Communion, 9.30am – St. Mary & St. Peter

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DANCE / EXERCISE CLASS FOR BEGINNERS

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burn calories

increase flexibility

increase bone density

improve muscle tone in a relaxed and fun way?



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on your feet and loose fitting clothes - lycra optional!

For further details contact Robin Hutt on 07792 951007 or 813182.

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ensure that you always have the same cleaning team, so there's nothing at all for you to worry about.

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FRIENDS OF PETT CHURCHES

As a result of last year's fund raising efforts, we have been able to spend £700 on having the electrical system thoroughly inspected, overhauled and some updating carried out. Now that the building is safe from lightning strikes and electrical fires, we hope to turn our attention to making it waterproof. The last gale dislodged some ridge tiles and the tower needs much overdue (and expensive) work to make it weatherproof.



Our next event will be **THE FETE, AT THE CHURCH, ON SATURDAY 7TH JUNE, FROM 1.30 - 3.30 PM.** Contributions of cakes, preserves, produce, plants, books, bric-a-brac, toys or prizes for the raffle and tombola will be most welcome and may be left at Pett Church or at October. Please put the date in your diary and support the Friends.



Jillian Green
(01424

813841)



Pett Village Hall
Would like to thank
The Gardening Club
For planting the wonderful
Display of Daffodils on the
approach to the Hall

CAN YOU FIGURE IT OUT?

Can figure out what these words
have in common?

Banana

Dresser

Grammar

Potato

Revive

Uneven

Assess

Are you peeking or have you
already given up?

Give it another try.

You will kick yourself when you
discover the answer.

Go back and look at them again;
think hard.

OK . . . Here You Go . . . Hope You
Didn't Cheat.

This Is Cool.

Answer:

In all of the words listed, if you take
the first letter, place it at the end of
the word, and then spell the word
backwards, it will be the same
word.



JUST A SEC!

Are you struggling with the admin side of your business? Let me help. I have many years experience in every aspect of office administration. I have excellent computer skills and my own fully equipped office. If you think you could do with some help, but not necessarily fulltime, then I could be the one to solve your problems.

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SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Members of the New Beach Club are politely reminded that their annual subscription is due for renewal on 1st April 2008. Following a proposal at the Club's AGM held on 9th March 2008 the cost of subscription is £12.50 per person per calendar year.

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NATURE NOTES

While walking along the Towpath at Pett Level I saw five or six black-headed gulls attacking a crow. They dive bombed it as it sat in a scrubby thorn bush, finally driving it out. Then they beat it up as it flew away. They were still mobbing it when it passed out of my view. Many birds mob crows, but I've never before seen gulls do it.



What a good year it is for fruit blossom, both in gardens and in the wild. Provided there are no late frosts there should be bonanza crops, which will be good for wildlife as well as for humans. Don't worry if you see blue tits poking about round the fruit buds - they are looking for aphids and will not harm the buds.

Rabbits are attractive little animals, cute and cuddly and evocative of Beatrix Potter. They are strict vegetarians and particularly enjoy fresh young shoots and tender seedlings, which is why, every year, I am asked how to keep them out of the garden. In my experience there is only one answer, and that is to get your garden properly rabbit-fenced, which includes an 'underhang' to stop them digging underneath. I had mine done by a local contractor



back in 1993, and since then I have had no trouble at all and the fence is still in good nick, so it was worth every penny. Thank you John!

May is the time to look out for the Spotted Orchids on the bank opposite the Methodist Church. Most years there are more than a hundred there. You should also be able to find some on the grass verge at the Pett end of Rosemary Lane. There are (or were) green-winged orchids in many of the gardens between the Royal Oak and the Parish Church. If you can bear to leave your grass a bit longer, you may be surprised what comes up.

Avril Thurley

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DO YOU KNOW ?

Do you know about the many customs associated with the month of May?

May Day is a time of traditional and colourful customs many of which are celebrated on either May Day itself or during the first weekend in the month. Listed below are a few customs still being observed around the country.

Sweeps Festival, Rochester, Kent: This occurs in the first weekend in May and is a throwback to pagan traditions. It coincides with the practice of Chimney Sweeps welcoming the summer so that they could clean the dirty chimneys. Dancers and musicians converge on the street to provide a wonderful and colourful parade.

Spalding Flower Festival: Thousands of tulips adorn floats in this annual event.

Well Dressing in Derbyshire: This is a superb spectacle and if you have never seen it you should try to make it a 'must do this' event.

Beating the Bounds: A custom from the 5th century when parishioners asked for God's blessing to protect their crops. This was carried out in Pett several times in the 18th, 19th and 20th century.

Stilton Cheese Rolling: Takes place on the early May Bank Holiday near Peterborough. Participants compete in rolling large rounded blocks of wood along a street for a

prize of stilton cheese and bottles of port.

Furry Dance, Helston, Cornwall: This floral dance always takes place on the 8th May, except when that falls on a Sunday or Monday, when the dance is held on the previous Saturday. The Helston Floral Dance is one of the oldest surviving customs in the country and is a festival to celebrate the coming of spring and the passing of winter.

Blessing the Sea: This is carried out in many places around the coast. In Hastings it usually occurs at the end of May when the local fishing season begins. The custom goes back to medieval times.

Oak Apple Day: Many people wear oak-apple leave in their lapels or hats and decorate their front doors on Oak Apple Day. At one time, if you didn't, you would risk being stung with nettles or kicked and pinched for being a Roundhead. This is still celebrated by many children in Sussex as 'Pinch-Bum-Day'.

Bread and Cheese Throwing, St. Briavels, Gloucestershire: Following evensong on Whit Monday, basketfuls of bread and cheese are thrown from a wall near the old castle, to be scrambled for in a lane below.

Cheese Rolling, Cooper's Hill, Brookworth, Gloucestershire: Forty thousand spectators congregate at Cooper's Hill to watch the traditional 7lb Double Gloucester cheese hurtle

down a steep slope, pursued by dozens of running, rolling competitors, the fastest of whom wins the cheese.

Wool Sack Race, Tetbury: Regulars of the Crown and Royal Oak pub compete in the annual Wool Sack race. They run up Gumstool Hill with a 60lb sack of wool on their backs.

Jack in the Green Festival, Hastings: This takes place on the

Spring Bank Holiday Monday. The Jack is the symbol of the summer.

So you can see that there is a lot to choose from. Next May we might take a closer look at the origins of one of the above; perhaps Oak Apple (or as it is known in some places as Shick-Shack Day).

John Taylor

GARDENING CLUB MEETING APRIL 2008

Our Plant Sale went with quite a swing, so many people brought plants to sell, and I would like to take this opportunity to say a big "Thank you" to all of you who helped to make the evening such a success.

We had quite a variety of plants, including potted trees (!) and some indoor plants for the Conservatory!

One or two members who were unable to come along to Tuesday evenings meeting have popped in to see me over the last few days and I have sold even more pots of flowers and seedlings.

So our bank balance is once again in the black ! ready for new Speakers for next year.

Our meeting for May, as members will know is a trip out to the Apple Orchards in Peasmarsh. We meet at the Village Hall at 6.30 pm on Tuesday May 13th .

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JUST A MUM?!

A woman, renewing her driving license was asked to state her occupation by the clerk dealing with her. She hesitated, uncertain how to classify herself. "What I mean is," explained the counter clerk, "do you have a job or are you just a...?" "Of course I have a job," snapped the woman. "I'm a Mum." "We don't list 'Mum' as an occupation, 'Housewife' covers it," said the clerk emphatically.

I forgot all about her story until one day I found myself in the same situation, this time at our own Medicare office. The clerk was obviously a career woman, poised, efficient and possessed a high sounding title like 'Official Interrogator' or Town Registrar. "What is your occupation?" she probed.

What made me say it, I do not know. The words simply popped out. "I'm a Research Associate in the field of Child Development and Human Relations." The clerk paused, ball-point pen frozen in mid air, and she looked up as though she had not heard correctly. I repeated the title slowly emphasising the most significant words. Then I stared with wonder as my pronouncement was written, in bold, black ink on the official questionnaire. "Might I ask," said the clerk with new interest, "just what you do in your field?"

Coolly, without a trace of fluster in my voice, I heard myself reply, "I have a continuing programme of research, [what mother doesn't?] in the laboratory and in the field, [normally I would have said indoors

and out]. I'm working for my Masters [first the Lord and then the whole family] and already have four credits [all daughters]. Of course, the job is one of the most demanding in the humanities, [any mother care to disagree?] and I often work 14 hours a day, [24 is more like it!]. But the job is more challenging than most run-of-the-mill careers and the rewards are more of a satisfaction rather than just money.

There was an increasing note of respect in the clerk's voice as she completed the form, stood up, and personally ushered me to the door.

As I drove into our driveway, buoyed up by my glamorous new career, I was greeted by my lab assistants - ages 13, 7 and 3. Upstairs I could hear our new experimental model, (a six month old baby) in the child development programme, testing out a new vocal pattern.

I felt I had scored a beat on bureaucracy! And I had gone on the official records as someone more distinguished and indispensable to mankind than 'just another Mum'.

Motherhood!! What a glorious career! Especially when there's a title on the door.

Does this make grandmothers 'Senior Research Associates in the field of Child Development and Human Relations' and great grandmothers 'Executive Senior Research Associates'? I think so !!! I also think it makes Aunts 'Associate Research Assistants'!!!



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CHRISTIAN AID WEEK - 11-17 MAY

Water: what a topic of concern and conversation! Such a simple commodity, yet it dominates our well-being, and gives us so much to talk about. Adequate aquifers; dreaded droughts; flooded fields; harmful hosepipes; retreating reservoirs; terrifying tides and (sotto voce!) even stressful sewerage - we've heard about them all!

But in Bangladesh the problem of simply getting clean water is a constant one. In some areas there is scarcity, yet in others floods can persist for more than half the year, and cause contamination with arsenic, while in the south-west rising sea levels make fresh water salty. People often have to walk for up to 24 hours to get water to drink.

Most of the water-carrying, health and economic burdens fall on the women and children. But now it is the women who are being encouraged to take an active role in seeking improvements, through their local "pani parishad", the village water council. These councils have been set up throughout Bangladesh by one of Christian Aid's partner organisations, and they discuss and agree the best water supply solutions for their particular village, and also provide a forum for addressing other community issues, such as education and roads. One pioneering lady explains that: "In the pani parishad, we give training to help (people) understand what they need and then how to achieve it. But most importantly, they understand that

they can do things for themselves."

Christian Aid Week (11-17 May) gives us an opportunity once again to help financially, not only in Bangladesh, but in many other countries across the globe. So we'll be popping our red envelopes through as many of our village letterboxes as we can, and hoping people will feel able to give them back to our house-to-house collectors with money inside, and if possible signed to say (if they are income-tax payers) that they would like their donation to the Gift-aided. People's support last year was wonderful, and we reached a record total. Can we do it again?

We'll be having our annual Christian Aid Coffee Morning at Paxstead, Pett Road (opp. Recreation Ground) on Saturday 10 May, 10am-12noon, with cakes, plants, bring & buy, raffle, and sale of Traidcraft goods. A donation of 60p minimum provides tea, coffee, cold drinks and biscuits - and hopefully a nice sociable morning. We'd love to see you there, along with as many friends and relations as you can muster!

To conclude the Week, there'll be a special Christian Aid service in St. Mary & St Peter Church at 9.30am on Sunday 18th May - an opportunity to see some short videos about Christian Aid's work, and to give a big "Thank You" for all that is achieved. Do come if you can!

Ray Taylor (814674)

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