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SPRING 2021 MARCH–MAY

Edited by Jen Green jengreenuk@yahoo.co.uk

Note from the editor: 2020, a year like no other, has come and gone, but Covid-19 is still very much affecting all of our daily lives. Like everything else, *Pigeon Post* has been changed by the pandemic. Our usual features Upcoming Events and Regular Events are still furloughed thanks to a third lockdown which began in January. However local groups are still meeting regularly online... Life goes on, community spirit is still strong, and now the rollout of the vaccine is giving hope to us all. Hopefully by the next edition of *Pigeon Post* things will have started to return to normal, or to a new post-Covid version of normal...

Groups in Fulking

Sadly for safety reasons the Village Hall remains closed. Let's hope we will be able to have Toddlers, Craft, Yoga and Games Evenings back in the hall before too long.

Yoga classes by Tricia Robinson

Mondays 9.30-10.30, & 18.30-19.30. Drop in, mixed ability. Tuesdays 19.00, Fridays 9.30 All on Zoom, contact Tricia 255

Quotations Mondays 10.45. Discussion group reflecting on quotes from the world's faiths. Now taking place on Zoom: contact Samantha Leader 07479 458323 for more details.

Environmental matters by Pam Rowland
Spring is on the way – thank goodness – we need something to brighten our days! As I write this, you could count the sunny days since Christmas on one hand. However, if you grow vegetables, now is the time to plant broad beans and early peas. That means it's time to buy your seeds, and how about including a packet or two of wild flowers to help the bees and butterflies? As the temperature rises birds will be "house hunting". If you have nest boxes make sure they are clean and clear of debris ready for the breeding season.

Towards the end of March we usually have our annual village clear-up of rubbish. I can't believe that for a second year we won't be able to do this as a joint effort, but please keep up the good work you have all been doing to keep our village tidy. I'm always amazed at how much people sling onto our verges; cans, bottles and crisp packets, along with the occasional carrier bag of mixed rubbish! And worse, I recently picked up three discarded face masks...

Keep safe and keep positive. Fingers crossed we can all get together late summer??

Winter in Fulking by Chris Gildersleeve

Well, winter is always a bit of a challenge, and I think being in lockdown has made it even more dreary and boring, with long dark nights and little social contact. The positive side has been the continued success of the WhatsApp group, which has given us useful information, support and offers of help throughout this time. As most of

you know, I contracted Covid in January, and have had generous offers of help from a range of people, some of whom I don't actually know! As I write this, things are looking more positive, with the rapid progress of the vaccination drive, which will make us feel safer and reduce the number of cases. So we can look forward to more social contact in the near future, I hope. And of course spring is just starting, and we have had snowdrops, primroses, and now daffodils in the garden, which lift our spirits. I always feel better in February when the sun stays up later over the Downs, and the days are getting longer.

Bobobservation No78 March 2021

Bird Watching

Fortunately, the restrictions imposed on us by Coronavirus have not interfered totally with the pleasures of bird watching. Be warned! This hobby is very addictive, but probably one of the least expensive to enjoy. Whilst birding can be enjoyed just by looking out of the window, the only essential, other than waterproof clothing, is a reasonable pair of binoculars. I find a good bird identification guide is a great help, preferably pocket size. These days a great deal of information can be found on the internet and indeed, there is a good birdsong library on the village website for birds that have been seen or heard in Fulking over the last nearly thirty years.

Pandemic Zooming

In company with other villagers I am involved in several Zoom meetings. Having got over my initial horror at what it entails, I can understand that while Coronavirus limitations are placed upon us, it enables virtual social gatherings to take place. However, I look forward to the day when we can have live meetings again. I cannot imagine what it would be like to hold a Zoom Village Fair! Hopefully Sunday 25 July will see the real thing, however limited it may be.

Miles Firth

Having experienced the demands of being Chair of the Parish Council I can appreciate why Miles made the decision to step down after years of service. In my opinion he has been the best and

most industrious Chair in all the time I have been in Fulking. He will be hard to replace. Please join me in thanking him for the wise and dedicated way in which he has served us.

Lucy Mehta is your new Parish Councillor

Mark Hind, Acting Chairman of Fulking Parish Council, writes: "I am delighted to advise that Lucy Mehta was co-opted onto the PC on 23rd February. This fills a vacancy created by the resignation of Miles Firth our Chairman in January. Lucy has lived and worked in many countries but she and her family have now settled for the long term in Fulking. She is keen to contribute to the community and is looking forward to supporting the PC in its efforts to conserve Fulking's special heritage."

My Covid-19 Vaccinator Journey by Tricia Robinson

Administering Covid vaccinations is one of the most rewarding jobs I have ever done – and it will go down in history, too! Last April the NHS contacted me about coming out of retirement to return to nursing or midwifery. I agreed, as it felt good to be able to do something. In October a local Community Health Trust requested my assistance with the Covid-19 vaccinations. I ploughed through the online training and form-filling, and attended a couple of study sessions.

In early January I was assigned to assist the GPs at St Augustine's Centre and then at Brighton Racecourse. Most people being vaccinated then were the very elderly and vulnerable. It was very moving vaccinating people who had not left their homes since last March, they were so grateful and relieved.

At the end of January the Brighton Centre opened, so I moved there. I have mainly been running the vaccinating pods and training vaccinators. We have quite a few airline cabin crew and pilots vaccinating, as they have a considerable amount of medical training. They have good people skills and are good at calming people! We have St John's Ambulance volunteers helping to vaccinate, plus doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, pharmacists, and nurses who are either helping on their days off, or have come out of retirement. Other volunteers guide people through the centre and keep them calm.

The people being vaccinated are gradually getting younger, and there are now more vulnerable people attending. We also vaccinate lots of Health and Social Care workers, for their own protection and that of their clients.

My daughter Charlotte started working at the Brighton Centre when I did. She organises the staff rosters, which is a nightmare as most people are part-time! So many different groups of people have come forward to support the vaccination program. The spirit is amazingly positive, with everyone very grateful as they turn up for their job!

Church News from St Andrews by Jane Warne
Our Church at Edburton is still closed but we are planning to open on Easter Day, Sunday 4th April. If there is still 'lockdown' there will only be room for a small congregation but our service will then be 'zoomed'. There is always a zoom service every Sunday at 10.30 from one of our churches and if you would like to join us, the link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84660338130?pwd=Y2c0eVlzT1Q1dU81dStEbmY4SHZRZz09>. The passcode is 536874. We are now part of the Mid Downland Parish, and all details of the confirmation of this are in the accompanying letter from our Rector, Tim Harford.

The Book Nook, despite being closed, has had several donations of books in the past few months. If you would like a bag of reading matter, maybe by a particular author, we can probably arrange a 'click and collect' or delivery if we have them in stock. We are looking forward to being able to start up our events again. Meanwhile if you are spring cleaning, please think of us when you are throwing things out as we hope to hold our usual Bric-a-Brac stalls later in the year. Thank you again from us all at St Andrew's for your continued support. To contact us phone 07812-465-559 or email StAndrewsEdburton@yahoo.co.uk.

COVID-19 Support in Fulking Covid Vaccinations

Tricia Robinson, part of the Covid vaccination team at the Brighton Centre, advises: "Anyone who is in an eligible group for a Covid-19 vaccination can phone 119 and book their first and second doses of the vaccine. You can also book online. The Brighton Centre is open from 8.30am till 7.30pm seven days a week, and has free parking in Churchill Square Carpark. There is minimal queuing and plenty of space!

Fulking.net carries regular updates about the virus, current government regulations etc. Dates of Parish Council meetings and minutes of the meetings are available online.

Mailing List – We use the mailing list as an official channel for local events, information and Council announcements. To join up or send a message, contact parish.clerk@fulking.net.

The Parish Council says: If you are vulnerable and/or self-isolating and need help with shopping, collecting medical prescriptions or other issues, please email Trevor Parsons on parish.clerk@fulking.net or tel 07767 422733 or Mark Hind on 01273 857049.

And finally: The next edition of *Pigeon Post* is due out on June 1. All contributions welcome, by email please to jengreenuk@yahoo.co.uk – deadline is one week before.