

# *the* Hurst

ISSUE 10

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2020

- Eating out in Hurst Green
- Holy Trinity update
- Comedy Capers
- Cricket Club News
- Village Hall
- *And more...*



**Stage Field: progress!**

What's going on in Hurst Green • News, views and information

## EDITORIAL

For those of you who walk through the churchyard, you might have noticed a whole new system for composting has been created in the far corner. Instigated by Bob and Zuzanna, this prompted an interest in the old graves which were completely overgrown and neglected. So, during the long days of lockdown a few of us have been busy clearing, weeding, and cleaning the headstones to reveal names and inscriptions of our departed residents. This has led to a new initiative 'Adopt a Grave' which you can read about in this magazine.

Continuing the outdoor theme, Stage Field, pictured on the cover, now has the benefit of a new entrance, parking, and has the potential to become a beautiful public space with splendid views; a place for people to get away from it all! Read more about this hidden treasure in the enclosed article.

Macmillan Coffee mornings have been a feature of our community for several years so this **September on Friday**

**25th** there will be a chance to raise some serious money for this worthy cause. See you **at the Village Hall between 9.30am-12pm**. Donations of cake welcome!

This is the 10th issue of *the Hurst* and I hope you enjoy reading it and keeping up to date with the village activities. It would be fantastic if more people could contribute so if you have anything that you think might be of interest, please do send it in. **Deadline for next copy is 5th November!**

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## USEFUL CONTACTS

Allotment Association 01580 860251

Breakfast Club (75+) 01580 860760

Brownies 01580 860742

Comedy Capers 01580 860221

Cricket Club 07796 976809

First Responders 07837 224905

Holy Trinity Church 01580 880282 (Vicar)  
01580 860649

Hurst Green C of E School 01580 860375

Nursery School 01580 860375 x211

Parish Clerk 01580 860111

Rother District Council 01424 787000

Short Mat Bowling 01424 773478


Twinning Association 01580 860977

Village Hall Booking Agent  
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## STAGE FIELD - Progress has been made!

Stage Field is an underused historic public open space gifted to the area in 1949 by Colonel T. B. Hornblower. The Parish Council took on a 999-year lease of the field in 2010. Situated on one of the highest points in the county, the field has commanding views over the surrounding area along with a rich historical past, being the site of the second largest Napoleonic fort in the country and with a 1960s Royal Observer bunker still in situ, not to mention the area's connection to the notorious Hawkhurst Gang and murder of customs officer Thomas Carswell.

Situated along Silverhill on the left, it is well served by a public footpath from the

road, but access by vehicle was previously very hazardous. For this reason, the Parish Council obtained planning permission for a new entrance point a bit further on, with improved visibility and a small parking area. This has now been completed and has opened up the field for greater access and perhaps more events and activities to be enjoyed by all. Ideas include a football/games area, wildflower meadow and picnic area, along with historical information boards and perhaps a map of the surrounding areas and places of note visible from the field.

The Parish Council is incredibly pleased that this new and improved access is part funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) is funded by Defra and the EU. The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD): Europe investing in rural areas.

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# Eating out in Hurst Green

## THE INS AND OUTS OF EATING OUT IN THE VILLAGE!

Thankfully, all through the lockdown, **The Claypot** has remained open for their delicious takeaways including the Banquet Night every Tuesday, thanks guys!

**The Fish and Chip shop** was initially shut but back in business now which is a bonus.

*Alan writes:* If you have recently passed **The Royal George**, you may have noticed scaffolding at the front of the building. Don't worry, it's nothing serious, we're just having a facelift. Since the beginning of the lockdown in March, we were lucky enough to be able to reinstate the takeaway service, which was going to be a temporary measure until things returned to normal.

We are happy to report that due to its success and wonderful feedback, Jo Lee decided bring back the takeaways permanently,

It is called **Eurasia Kitchen** and brings back favourite dishes from our time as Eurasia Restaurant.

The pub reopened on 4th June with social distancing and track and trace measures in place and has had a great response from customers.

**Eggs to Apples** have used their creative energy as usual and provided a variety of take away options, BBQ and PorkBox Food Truck to name a couple, and the garden café is now open again.

All these within walking distance too, so no complaints!



## The Village Hall – Sue's report...

**At last, we have finished all the inside decorating. The large hall was the last area to do and because of the closure we managed to get it done with no disruption to the classes. (Thank you, Ron.)**

We have deep cleaned most of the building. Just awaiting Comedy Capers finishing the stage area and then we can clean the large hall. The 'garden' at the back and the outside around the hall has been tidied and weeded. Just a small area at the front to be sorted. (Thank you, Richard.)

We now have 32 new chairs for the small hall. I am still bartering for new stage curtains!

We are just awaiting instruction from Boris as to when we can open.

I am taking provisional bookings for next year so please give me a call if you are interested in using our hall.

Also, the defibrillator which was situated at the Community Shop is now outside the Hall.



## Letter from the Vicar

I am writing this at the tail end of the heatwave, with storms expected. Even though the grass is a bit dry and scorched now, our garden still manages to look absolutely wonderful and we feel blessed every day. We watch the birds on the bird table and listen to their beautiful songs, we walk in the fields and witness the glorious diversity of nature and for us as Christians it lifts our hearts and causes us to want to praise God, even in the midst of all the difficulties that we are facing at this time.

The beauty of nature is for many Christians one of the biggest proofs for the existence of God. C. S. Lewis said, 'We do not want merely to see beauty, though, God knows, even that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words – to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it.' The theologian Ben Holloway adds, 'Beauty evokes longing. When we see or hear something of great beauty, we long for something beyond what we think is beautiful. A great piece of music impels us to desire for an experience beyond the one we are having. Of course, we can just say it is synapses and endorphins, but when we do, we neuter the power of the experience. Perhaps, Lewis suggests, the beauty we are glimpsing is not in the music or painting or mountain-top view, but from somewhere else mediated through our experience. Lewis concluded that there is no way to satisfy the longing evoked by beauty apart from a transcendent reality. That reality, for Lewis, is the Christian reality, God's reality'. I think this is a universal experience, and as I said, for many it is a proof of the existence of God, and more than that it can be a way that some people feel God speaking to them.



Harvest time has been well underway for a while and we are fast approaching the autumn. There is hope to be found as well in the changing of the seasons. The knowledge that whatever season we are in will pass, and in due time come round again. Even though for many of us our world seemed to stop for several months this year, life does in fact move on, seasons of sorrow will eventually change again into seasons of joy. This too, as the ancient Persian adage goes, will pass. The difficult season that we are going through will not last forever. Problems, trials, and suffering are all part of life. But, as followers of Jesus, Christians always have hope for tomorrow and peace for today. We should never give up hope!

God bless, **Rev Annette**

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# What's happening at Holy Trinity Church?

What is church anyway? Well the early Christian church had no buildings, at least not in the sense of what we would consider church buildings today. First century Christians were often persecuted and, as a result, met in secret, usually in homes. As the influence of Christianity spread, eventually buildings dedicated to worship were established and became what we know today as churches.

Basically, the church is not the building, it is a gathering of God's people, coming from the Greek word *ekklesia* meaning 'assembly' or called out ones i.e. Christians. A Christian is someone who believes in Jesus Christ and follows his teachings.

Since March when lockdown began and buildings were closed, Christians around the World have been finding safe ways to interact. Zoom, Facebook, YouTube etc have proved their worth in keeping people connected. In August, however, we started meeting weekly on **Sunday afternoons at 4pm for an informal service outside**. This has been a very pleasant experience and will continue for as long as the weather stays dry and warmish! After that, we will have a plan in place to safely meet inside again. At the moment masks must be worn inside the building so it is better to be in the open air!



▲ **Café Renew** has re-emerged in a fairly socially distanced way, also outside and it has been so good to get together again on Wednesday mornings. Again, we will work to make an inside space available in the coming weeks.

The weekly **Wednesday evening Bible Study** has been outside which again will continue weather permitting and move inside when needed. If you are interested in joining in any of these regular events, please contact us on 01580 860649. You will be very welcome!

The **Adopt a Grave** project has got off to a cracking start, 6 families signed up in the first week, chose their graves and started smartening them up.

Most of the graves are over 100 years old, so some of the stonework is badly in need of a good clean. We have been advised on the best way to do this and will pass on the tricks of the trade to everyone who gets involved.

Churchyard maintenance does not stop for any virus or disaster, grass still grows, and hedges continue to need attention. Thanks to everyone who has helped in this area, including Graham Browne's sheep!



We have resumed our collections for **Hastings Food Bank** and the **Hygiene Bank**

so if you have donations please bring them to the church on Wednesday mornings or Sundays. Many thanks for your generosity which will make such a difference to needy families.

Finally, and most importantly, if you would like to find out more about what we believe, why we have church or if you have any questions about the Christian faith, please feel free to join us at any of the above times or leave a message on our **Facebook page: Holy Trinity Hurst Green**

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## Spring into summer

in the time of the Corona Virus 2020  
More reflections by a local resident.

As May advanced into June the number of wild birds increased as nestlings fledged. Early one morning a fledgling dunnock alighted on the steps. Within seconds two others joined it. They soared and swooped displaying their joy at discovering freedom with their wings.

The number of goldfinches in gardens today has increased by 90 percent, since a survey done in the 70s. Global warming may have encouraged more goldfinches to settle in this country. Also keeping gardens wilder and not deadheading ripe seed heads gives the birds plenty to forage. Thistle heads and sunflower seeds encourage flocks of goldfinches delightfully known as 'a charm of Goldfinches'. Their traditional name is 'thistle tweaker'!

In previous centuries, the beauty of goldfinches meant they were captured in huge numbers to be sold as cage birds. In 1913 the poet, Edward Thomas, described the roadside hawkers selling caged goldfinches at five shillings and sixpence each. The tiny six-inch square cages the birds rattled against reminded him of a beating heart.


**The Hollow Wood** by Edward Thomas

Out in the sun the goldfinch flits  
Along the thistle tops, flits, and twits  
Above the hollow wood  
Where birds swim like fish  
Fish that laugh and shriek  
To and fro, far below  
In the pale hollow wood..

Lichen, ivy and moss  
Keep evergreen the trees  
That stand half- flayed and dying,  
And the gone trees on their knees  
In dog's mercury and moss:  
And the bright twit of the goldfinch drops  
Down there as he flits on thistle tops.

Adopt a Grave in action





## Stephen William Cruse

29.12.62–3.7.20

**Stephen's passing has been a shock to everyone, but particularly for Liz and the children and for our father Robin and myself. When I was asked to write something for the village magazine, I accepted, little thinking how hard it would be. How do you sum up a person who has played such a huge part in so many lives, cut short so soon, in a few words?**

Stephen was born in Ramsbury, but we moved to the village when he was 3 years old, 54 years ago. Living in such a wonderful village was idyllic for us as children. I remember our house was always open to anyone or any animal, my parents welcoming all sorts of waifs and strays, even



to the extent that we brought a dead squirrel home one day thinking our Mum could make it better. The scream and being thrown into a bath to get rid of the fleas stopped us from repeating that episode! Although it never stopped Stephen from climbing a tree and disturbing a wasp's nest! I have never seen him run so fast since!

Typical brother and sister, we fought like Tom and Jerry – but we were also very protective of each

other. Seeing his sister being scared with a plastic snake at primary school was enough for Stephen to push the offending child and thereby earning himself a lecture in the headmaster's office. My hero!

Stephen loved this village so much that rather than move away, apart from a brief spell in Hastings, he bought a house here and eventually became a married man with a wonderful family of his own. He and Liz were friends for many years before they started any romantic relationship. Liz remembers they met when Stephen, along with Mum, knocked on the then Woolpack Pub after the great storm to check that everyone was OK. They became firm friends, supporting each other for many years until romance blossomed and Stephen became an instant father to Liz's daughter Charlie until they had a son of their own, Arthur, to complete their family.

Stephen loved to take part in Comedy Capers and Children in Need and loved the 'camp' roles the best! The image of my brother playing the broken fairy, in a pink tutu, will be imprinted on my memory for ever.

His colleagues at work have nothing but good things to say about Stephen. The comment that seemed to sum up the way they felt the most is as follows: *Best described as a very personable and kind-hearted gentleman, Stephen was also very much a family man. He always had time for others and would always put their needs above his own.*

My brother was irritating and grumpy at times. Charlie often used to say that even his beard looked grumpy on occasions! My brother was also caring, loving and funny. He loved all his family and was, in turn, loved dearly by us all. If you were lucky enough to have him as a friend, you would know he would always be there for you no matter what. He gave the best bear hugs ever!



Stephen has left a huge hole in so many of our lives – a hole that can never be filled but he is reunited with our wonderful Mother and we carry them both in our hearts.

Thank you to every person who stood and showed their respects when Stephen took his final journey through the village – we were so proud. We would also, on behalf of the entire Cruse family, like to thank everyone for the messages, meals, cakes, flowers, and support at this incredibly sad time. Stephen so loved the village that we asked for donations to go towards the church, just as we did for mum.

Stephen would particularly like the quote we chose, which comes from one of his favourite books by Richard Bach – *Jonathan Livingstone Seagull*:

***"One school has finished, and it is time for another to begin".***

## The Hurst Green Cricket Club

*Thoughts on the state of play from Ian Hirst*

**It is fair to say our summer hasn't gone as expected, but that's the case for so many this year. Recreational cricket was given the go ahead to resume in July, with mitigations in place to prevent the spread of the virus.**

Unfortunately, we are unable to make the pavilion Covid secure due to its small rooms and narrow corridors. The need to frequently sanitise kit and player's hands during games along with other measures was an extra expense the club cannot easily afford. When we heard that Robertsbridge were not fielding their third XI team (who use the Hurst Green ground) we decided that going to all the effort and expense of preparing the pitch for just a few games was not viable.

This has left the club in a precarious position. We rely on players paying match fees and Robertsbridge using the ground to pay for insurance, fuel and other costs associated with maintaining the ground. With no matches there is no income and we have used our reserves to get through this summer. Next season may well be make or break for the club depending on whether the virus is still a factor in putting on matches. Let us hope for progress and good news during the close season.

If you can help support the cricket club through sponsorship, volunteering or playing, please contact [hurstgreencricketclub@gmail.com](mailto:hurstgreencricketclub@gmail.com)



# Gardening Tips for Autumn

by *The Gardener*

## SEPTEMBER

- Semi-ripe hardwood cuttings can be taken this month from roses, herbs and soft fruit, such as currants and gooseberries. These will be clones of the parent plant. Remember to place the cutting in a plastic bag straight away to prevent drying out. Always use a sharp knife or sharp secateurs. Cuttings grow best in a gritty compost. Just keep them moist not wet.
- Plant Spring bulbs this month, especially daffodils as they produce their roots long before there is any sign of green foliage above ground.

## OCTOBER

- Carry on planting bulbs when conditions allow. Collect as many leaves as you can to make leaf mould. Avoid leaves with thick stems, such as Sycamore, Acers and common Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus*). These are best run through a shredder or cut up finely, otherwise they take a long time to compost down.

## NOVEMBER

- This is the time to cut off spent flower stems that have fallen over. Leave those that have seeds, which the birds will eat through the winter.  
Cut the stems back to some 5cm from the crown of the plant.



# Community Shop – still on the cards!

**Closed but not forgotten, a work in progress.** Understandably, the Covid pandemic has put a brake on the progress but negotiations are ongoing with the interested parties and potentially a new start for the building will happen. So watch this space!



## Some helpful local services

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Steve Walker – Plumber 07564 405702

**Electricians** Tim Russell 07771 687636 trussell.5@btinternet.com  
Ian Moore-Rushworth 07703 021767

**Building and renovations** Mark Roby 07453 458836.  
Pioneeringcarpentry@yahoo.com

**Leather repairs** Zip replacement, leather stitching etc. Kay Lloyd, Wealden Saddlery 01580 860860

**Plastering & tiling** Edd Ripley 07875 494493.

**Dog minder** Holiday and day care. Lorely Watson 01580 880061 / 07796 392653

**Mobile Car Mechanic** Cliff Mercer 07909 911869

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# Comedy Capers Stage renovations



**Back at the beginning of March 2020, Comedy Capers held a meeting in the Royal George to discuss fund raising and ideas for future productions. We had ambitious plans to make some money; not only for Children in Need but for much needed renovations of the Stage. Back in 2000, when the Village Hall was extensively enlarged and refurbished, the stage area was not touched. We all know what happened next...**

Sue Endean realised that, with the hall out of use for many months, this was the perfect time to repaint the main hall. She asked Comedy Capers to clear out under the stage. When a few of us, all socially distancing of course, got together, we discussed the possibility of going further and to begin plans that had been talked of for many years. Storage has always been a problem for Comedy Capers. We try to keep good props, costumes and pieces of versatile scenery and we never have enough space. However, we always knew that there was a very inaccessible, but potential large storage area above the stage. So the demolition team set to work, knocking out ancient crumbling plaster, removing a huge scenery roller and taking down stage lights, microphones and curtains.

The floor above the stage has now been fitted with big decking boards and there

will be two access points. You will need a head for heights, but there will be properly installed ladders to use. Sue has set about getting quotes for curtains. We have no idea how old those red velvet ones were; no-one can remember. We will be looking to replace the stage lights with more efficient ones and we will probably not stop there. Comedy Capers looks forward to our next productions, but with current restrictions we probably still have a way to go. We hope to fund raise meanwhile so look out for updates AND a big relaunch when the time is right to do so.

We have donated to the church in memory of a much-loved founding member of Comedy Capers, Stephen Cruse, who was particularly fond of Children in Need. We will miss him greatly. Colleen Burt



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