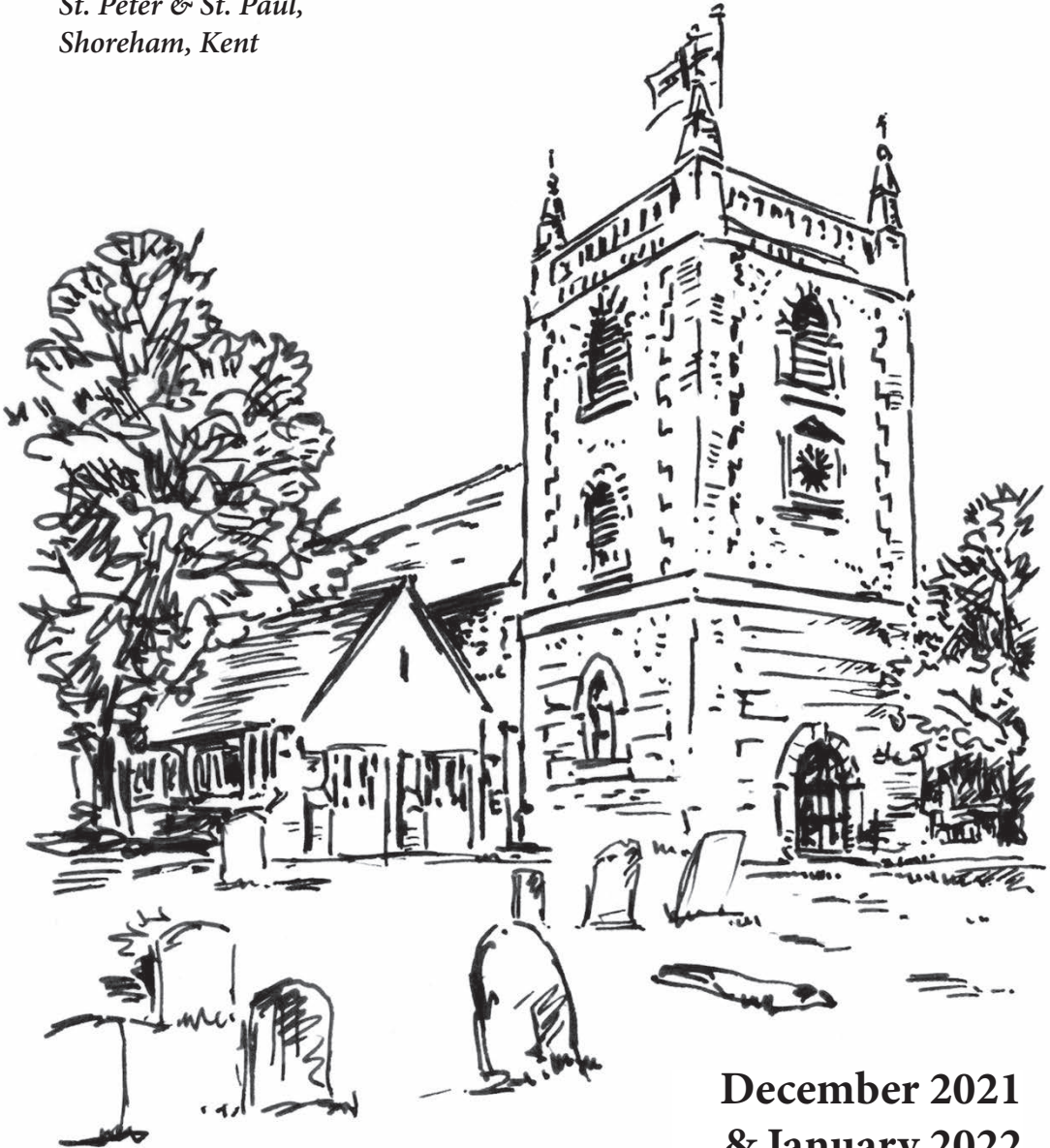


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CHRISTMAS: TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY ... AND A REASON FOR HOPE

Lo, Jesus came heralded by a star
and so each year candles flicker
and sweet carols rise.
What an infinitely small view we take
of this cosmic happening
and spiritual intrusion.
God came to earth.

The Creator became a creature.
The Prince of peace became a pauper;
The Word of God a speechless child.
King he was in heaven
Yet on earth a lowly vassal.
The Source of all knowledge thought the world was flat.
The communicator of truth
spoke Hebrew and Aramaic.
God came to earth
to lie howling in his mothers arms
and nuzzling at her breast.

And yet,
we sing sentimental carols
of angel choirs
and spotless shepherd boys
And wonder where
our God has gone! (Malcolm Hughes, *from Hiding behind a Teacup*)

I wonder what Christmas holds for you this year?

For many of us, Christmas usually means a fun, exciting, if rather busy time. Last year, of course, was quite different and perhaps we longed for some of that busyness, that activity back, although maybe not all of it!

For some of us though, and I am one of them, Christmas is also a time, when we wrestle with grief, over a loss in the past or more recent. It can be especially difficult

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because no matter whom you've lost, at this time of year it is a poignant reminder amidst the celebrations that the person isn't with you anymore.

And then, for all of us, of course, we continue to live with the uncertainty brought by Covid.

But Christmas holds other things too. Although, as the poem by Malcolm Hughes reminds us, we can sanitise and sentimentalise God or reduce God to some sort cliché or glib answer, focusing on the true meaning of Christmas can actually be a surprising source of comfort.

Christmas gives us an opportunity to ponder God becoming human in the birth of Jesus. For God's life-changing love, revealed in the birth of Jesus, is the heart of Christmas. That doesn't mean that those dark or difficult times, those 'valleys of the shadow of death', magically disappear but there is something about the God we encounter at Christmas, that we can relate to and brings us hope.

Somehow, in ways that we can't understand or explain, as we kneel at the manger, we find ourselves we find ourselves face to face with God:

"... a God who comes very close and makes himself at home; who stands on no ceremony and has no majesty about him except the majesty of love ... a God who seems so small, so vulnerable, and yet is large enough to hold the universe in his embrace." (Trevor Dennis from *The Christmas Stories*).

At Christmas we celebrate God in the manger. The light shining in the darkness. The light behind every shadow. That light that may only be like a tiny candle, flickering in the darkness but it is there. And, as we know, the darker the place, the more we notice (and the more we need), those glimpses of the light.

Whatever Christmas holds for us this year, God is with us. God whose love comes down at Christmas and whose heart beats for you. So, let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place.

My very best wishes for a hope filled Christmas, whatever it holds for you this year.

Rev'd Diane

In him was life, and the light was the life of all people.

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness shall not overcome it. (John 1)



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9am Breakfast@Church

6pm Communion in church

12th December - 3rd Sunday of Advent

9am Communion in church

10.00 Sunday worship on Zoom

19th December - 4th Sunday of Advent

10am Communion in church with choir

6pm Carol Service followed by Mulled Wine and Mince Pies

20th December - Monday

Carol singing around the village - meet at church at 6pm

24th December - Friday - Christmas Eve

4pm Christingle service followed by hot drinks and Mince Pies

(If for any reason we are not able to meet together in church, we will meet outside, as we did last year and make a circle of light with our Christingles)

11.30pm Midnight Mass

25th December – Saturday - Christmas Day

10am Service for all in church

26th December - Sunday - Boxing Day

10am Communion in church (BCP)

2nd January 2022 - Epiphany

9am Breakfast@Church

6pm Communion in church

9th January 2022 - Baptism of Christ

9am Communion in church

10am Zoom service

16th January 2022 - Epiphany 2

10am Communion with choir in church

23rd January 2022 - Epiphany 3 - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

9am Communion in church (BCP)

10am Sunday worship on Zoom

30th January 2022 - Presentation of Christ in the Temple

10am Communion with choir in church

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Stars and Hearts - write a Christmas prayer or draw a picture, hang on the tree branches.

Breakfast@Church - 5th December - 2nd January

Please come along and join in the fun - the first Sunday of every month - breakfast with bacon roll, croissant, drink - theme, reading, talk, prayers and an activity - EVERYONE WELCOME

SHOREHAM CHURCH IN THE MEDIA www.shorehamchurchkent.org

Here you can find copies of the Sunday service sheets and video recordings. Contact details, Make a donation, information regarding the opening of the Church and the most recent issue of the Gazette.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ShorehamChurch>

JUST A REMINDER FROM THE GAZETTE TEAM THAT THE NEXT GAZETTE WILL BE FEBURARY 2022 AND YOUR COPY SHOULD BE SENT TO ANN BALL (EDITOR) BY 20TH JANUARY TO SHOREHAMGAZETTE7@GMAIL.COM

NEW SHOREHAM TODDLER GROUP FROM 10th JANUARY 2022

Exciting news: Shoreham Church is starting up a group for babies, toddlers and their carers every Monday morning in term time from 10th January. Initially it will take place in the Village Hall, from 10am to 12 noon. Refreshments will be provided for a small fee. We look forward to introducing the new group leader and giving more details as soon as we can. Watch out for more details on the Church and Village Facebook pages. You can reach us via shorehamchurchtoddlers@gmail.com.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous legacy from Ruth Ellis Smith which has made this possible. Please tell everyone you know who might be interested!

Shoreham Church Toddler Group Committee: *Revd Diane Rees, Jill Aisher, Sarah Noah, Bill Latimer*

THE BLOSSOM PATH IN THE CHURCHYARD

The splendid avenue of trees from the bell tower down to the lychgate is about to get a fresh look with five new trees being planted on 1st December so access to the churchyard will be restricted that day. The Trees have been donated by Johnny Aisher, The Ball family, the Howie family, Bill Latimer and Valerie Turner.

Ann Ball, Deputy Churchwarden



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GREEN HEAT NETWORK FANTASTIC NEWS!

We are delighted to announce that the Parish Council has been awarded £40,000 to fund a feasibility study which will assess the viability of a heat network in Shoreham. The aim is to identify a future-proofed, low carbon heating solution for homes and businesses village wide.

The encouragement and support offered by people in Shoreham was crucial for the success of the bid. Your involvement and commitment will also play a huge part in the success of the next stage of the process so, if you haven't already done so, do get in touch with us at greenheatingshoreham@gmail.com to stay in touch with progress and, hopefully, contribute to this important community venture. Once the funding agreement is completed, we should be underway in January.

Bill Lattimer, Peter Kasch, Nick Copeman, Sarah Newman, Mike and Heather Sillitoe, Alan and Debbie Davies

EMERGENCY RESILIENCE

It seems that we receive reports of extreme weather events in different parts of the world and even in this country each week. The Kent Resilience Forum are warning us to expect more of these each year. It is difficult to prepare for these but we do need to maintain our resilience to heavy rain and snow to avoid the risk of flooding and isolation. The one thing we can and must do is to ensure that our drains and river ways are unobstructed and keep flowing. We are very grateful to Lindsay and Duncan McRae for their expert managing of the weir and to the landowners who have tried to ensure that the River Darent and the Manor Drain keep flowing. We all can help:

1. Nothing, even vegetation, should be put in the river. Any blockages or debris should immediately be reported to the Environment Agency.
2. Drains should be kept clear. To ensure this it is important that leaves and debris are cleared regularly from the gullies. Whilst Sevenoaks District Council do send a sweeper van around regularly, it is impossible for the gullies to be completely cleared because of parked cars. If everyone took time to look at the gullies outside their properties and clear them, it would save drains becoming blocked. Kent County Council are aware of the blocked drains in Station Road. Anyone can report a blockage online by following the website;- KCC Highways, Report a Fault and indicate on the map where the problem is.

Anyone who lives within the 100 year flood risk area should have their own Personal Flood Plan. This is basically a check list of everything that needs to be done before vacating a flooded property and essentials to be taken on vacating. There are also modifications that can be made to your property and items that can be purchased: smart airbricks or airbrick covers, non-return valves for waste water pipes, flood sacks and pan seals for ground floor toilets. We do have a Resilience Plan for the village as a whole.

I shall be attending the next Parish Council Meeting to report on updates and could bring samples of the items mentioned that were left for us by a company that came to present an information event some years ago. The village has coped with many emergency



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situations but I do remember January 2014 when there was some flooding, villagers coming out to wade along the roads asking “What can I do?” The short answer is “It’s a bit too late!” The important thing is to try to ensure we all contribute to maintain mitigation measures.

If you are unable to attend the Parish Council meeting on 1st December at 7.30pm and wish to ask questions, are unsure if your property is within the flood zone, please contact me or the Parish Clerk for information, advice, or clarification .

Lesley Spence (Resilience Officer) Lesleyspence@aol.com

CITIZENS ADVICE

In response to COVID19 Sevenoaks Citizens Advice has temporarily changed how the service is delivered. We no longer give advice face to face so there is no drop-in service, or Otford outreach. You can still ring us for advice on any problem, big or small, especially if you are affected personally or financially by the coronavirus emergency, on the new freephone number 0808 278 7810 (10am-3pm, Monday-Friday), or by email: advice@nwkent.cab.org.uk. There is also extensive up-to-date information on the Citizens Advice public website www.citizensadvice.org.uk.

TEMENOS CHAMBER CHOIR

Bach and Bruckner. Saturday 26 February, 7.30pm at St Mary’s Church Riverhead.

A wonderful programme of music by these two majestic composers: Bach Komm, Jesu, komm; Lobet den Herrn; Der Geist hilft; Singet dem Herrn and Bruckner Locus iste; Os justi; Christus factus est; Ave Maria.

Kate Britten

SHOREHAM VILLAGE STORES

For your concert tickets, cards, decorations, mulled wine, Christmas trees, calendars, mince pies, champagne and a host of other festive items, the shop looks forward to seeing you this December. As usual, there will be plenty of last-minute gifts, plus food and drink for those last-minute guests. For stocking-fillers, why not take a look at our local books and guides, such as Nick Walker’s story of the cricket club or the Historical Society’s *Shoreham Past and Present*. Thank you for your custom throughout another difficult year for all of us, and we send you our warmest wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Raj, Desh and Prasanth

TALES FROM THE HILL

There is little doubt about the year our house was built as the date is carved in stone over the front door, it reads 1752. This was a special year for Britain as it was the year that we changed from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian. It was not a simple process it required a degree of diplomatic skills and scientific certainty. Some countries in Europe adopted the new calendar in 1582 and Turkey was the last to do so in 1926. The reason for

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changing was that the Julian calendar had an inbuilt error, it was out by 1 day in every 128 years due to a miscalculation of the solar year by 11 minutes. This affected the date of Easter, traditionally observed on March 21st as it began to move further away from the spring equinox with each passing year.

For the majority of the British population the concept of any change was difficult to grasp, when they heard that to align Britain with most of Europe it meant, in essence, losing eleven days from 1751 so that 1752 started on the first of January, it triggered an irrational protest from a number of ill informed MP's. Of course no one would die eleven days early or that it was a portentous indication of an imminent Armageddon.

Clock winders had to take note and farmers might take off their caps and scratch their heads and wonder why their crops appeared to ripen a little earlier. A campaign was launched with the cry "GIVE US BACK OUR ELEVEN DAYS" perhaps not so different to the cries of climate change deniers of today.

The stone carver who chiselled 1752 above our door and the residents of Rose Cottage at that time were probably unaware of the significance of this date, we will never know, but I would like to think that down here in the peace of Magpie Bottom it really didn't matter. Happy Christmas to you all. *John Bovington*

NEW CLERK TO PARISH COUNCIL

Shoreham Parish Council is pleased to announce the appointment of its new Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, Amanda Barlow. Amanda currently works for Sundridge & Ide Hill Parish Council and will be undertaking the role at Shoreham Parish Council in addition to this. She brings a wealth of experience to the team is highly qualified having achieved her Certificate in Local Council Administration a few years ago. Amanda will be working fifteen hours per week and will be based at her home in Paddock Wood. She will of course attend all council and planning meetings and it is hoped that she will reignite the monthly PC surgery at the church room. Amanda will start officially on 1st January 2022 and will use the same contact telephone number and email address as I currently have. I am sure that Amanda will be an excellent addition to Shoreham Parish Council and I hope that you will join me in welcoming her to our parish.

Separately, I will be leaving my role as Clerk on 30th November and although I have agreed to do some ad hoc work until Amanda starts, the Parish Council will essentially be 'clerkless' until the New Year so please bear with us during this time.

Once again, I would like to express how much I have enjoyed my time working for the Parish Council. I will miss everyone but I am certain that you will be in safe hands.

Sarah Moon clerk2012@shorehamparishcouncil.gov.uk 07912 611048

Sarah will be much missed and among the many special legacies she leaves for the village is the amazing children's playground and preserving the Cross on the Hill for all time by getting it listed. Thank you Sarah

We look forward to welcoming Amanda to our lovely parish of Shoreham *Ann Ball*

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SHOREHAM SOCIETY

PUBLIC MEETING AND AGM FRIDAY 3rd DECEMBER 7.30pm VILLAGE HALL

Shoreham is a “dark village”, with no street lighting. We want to keep it that way, even if it is a little inconvenient when you bump into someone on the pavement at night, when there’s no moon to see by!

So, the topic for our next meeting is Dark Skies, and we are delighted to have Hilary Newport, Director of CPRE Kent, as our guest speaker. She will be giving a talk on the charity’s dark skies initiative, including the great benefits of reducing light pollution for humans and wildlife, and some top tips for star gazing. CPRE (formerly the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England) is an organisation that fights to save Kent’s countryside and which helps us a lot. We would urge you to join it.

Our short Annual General Meeting will follow, and this will be an opportunity to hear about what has been achieved in the past year and about some of our exciting plans for the future. William Alexander will also give a brief report on the year in farming. All members of the public are welcome, and wine and Sarah Parkes’ famous cheese biscuits will be on offer to all. We are always keen for new committee members to join us, particularly for new perspectives on how to improve the Village for everyone, so, please do not be hesitant about coming forward. You will be warmly welcomed.

FATHER CHRISTMAS. You’ll appreciate that Father Christmas has been suffering supply-chain difficulties this year, including a big increase in the cost of food for the reindeer. However, he always loves coming to Shoreham on Christmas Eve, and he has agreed to stop at the Village Hall at 5.15pm. Usual arrangements – small children with parents only. You can contact his elves if you have any questions (saynor9@gmail.com).

SHOREHAM WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Our next meeting will be our Christmas lunch - to be held on the 7th December at 12.30pm, courtesy of The Crown. This will be followed by the Community coffee morning on Thursday 9th December to be held at the Village Hall, 10.00-12.00pm. Tea/coffee and cake readily available. Do come and join us for a chat and catch up with friends.

Our 4th January 2022 meeting will be the first of our soup lunches. Soup will be served at 1.00pm prompt (Please be seated by 12.45pm). Our Speaker for this meeting will be Caroline Alexander. The subject of her talk will be the Ladybird Books as Caroline’s father, Douglas Keen, was the driving spirit behind Ladybird Books. In the years following the Second World War, under his editorial direction, the series of children’s books became a household name. This will be followed on Thursday the 13th January by the first Community coffee morning of 2022. The venue will be the Village Hall, time 10.00-12.00pm. Tea/coffee and cakes available. Open to all. Please come and join us.

The W.I. would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Sylvie Poynter

ANN HILTON

Agnes Hilton, known to everyone in the village as Ann, passed away peacefully aged 96, on 10th November having lived at The Bungalows in Church Street for over twenty five years before moving to Monmouth three years ago to be with her family and grandchildren

Whilst in the village, her door was always open for friends to pop in and she was friend and confidant to so many. Initially, she came to run the small grocery shop (now the Honey Pot Tea Rooms) and absolutely loved the children of the village. Many of them today; with their own children will remember how they came into the shop and she would sell them even tiny quantities of sweets from the jars if that was all the money they had, or they wanted to spin out a small amount of pocket money over the week. She was involved in many village roles including wardrobe mistress for the Shoreham Players, President of the Sevenoaks Alpha Poetry Group, Secretary of Shoreham W.I. and Treasurer of the Over 60's as well as helping with the village prescription run until she stopped driving at the age of ninety two.

Born and raised in the small Scottish, coastal town of Ayr, she became politically active as a teenager whilst working in the post office. She and my father moved to London in 1952, when my two brothers were just infants and I was on the way, so that was quite a leap. With two thirds of Dad's salary going to pay for the mortgage, things were financially very tight and whilst he was out many evenings earning extra money giving talks and lectures. She was writing articles and stories for journals whilst bringing up a family of four that included my foster sister.

She supported Dad throughout his political career and when he became MP for Bethnal Green for ten years, she played a leading role in all constituency and parliamentary matters. She later used those experiences to play a valuable role in the Citizens Advice Bureau. Always interested in people she had many friends of all ages. We miss her sorely and give thanks to all her friends in the village that helped to make her so happy here.

Doug Hilton

LOVING IS GIVING

The season of giving, bells ringing clear,
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Of kindled excitement all through the air -
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Many world's victims seek asylum here
And come with heavy hearts, weighed
down with care;
Should we refuse our gifts and then declare,
"No room, no room! You are not welcome here".
Could we then kneel in church and ask this love
Of His to shine on us who have no heart

For fellow man less fortunate than us?
We pray for peace, for guidance from above,
To care for others, help us play our part
In making every day a Happy Christmas.

Ann Hilton, Shoreham WI

This poem by Ann was chosen for the West Kent Women's Institute Calendar some years ago and we are indebted to Sheila Wilson for sending this to the Gazette.

SHOREHAM AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

<https://shorehamkenthistory.weebly.com>

At our November meeting, Mike Brown gave a fascinating talk on "The Real Dad's Army". With the aid of artefacts and recordings, he traced the story of the wartime Home Guard from a ragtag band of volunteers into a well-trained defence force - and showed how the TV comedy got some things wrong and some things hilariously right.

The next meeting will be 21st January 2022 when Paul Murphy will give the Dr Lothian Lecture entitled "From Here to Maternity; Men in Midwifery".

A reminder to look at the Historical Society Website as above for the latest entries of photographs, articles on buildings & people.

Annual Subscriptions of £8 may be paid at meetings or alternatively by BACs to Lloyds bank - Sevenoaks Branch Account Name - Shoreham Historical Society
Sort Code 30-97-49 Account Number – 00121279
Happy Christmas & Healthy New Year

Lynda Alleeson

SHOREHAM VILLAGE SCHOOL

As the Autumn days shorten we have been very busy at school developing our skills and knowledge in many different ways.

Our eldest pupils in Cameron Class were fortunate to have expert training on critical life-saving skills. The children learned how to respond to an emergency situation and all had the opportunity to practise CPR on manikins. The children were not previously aware that it is most likely that these skills will be needed (if ever at all) to help someone that they know and they were very enthusiastic about acquiring them.

Six pupils from Moore Class took part in the Sevenoaks Schools Aqua-Splash event at Sevenoaks School; this is a tough competition as we entered with just half a team compared to all the other schools. Our swimmers achieved a gold in backstroke, a bronze in breaststroke and a bronze in freestyle. We had several 4th positions just like Team GB at the Olympics! After the races the team had great fun taking part in activities such

as water polo, life-saving, underwater swimming and ‘inflatable time.’ Well done Team Shoreham!

We are exceptionally proud of one of our pupils, who entered the Farmvention competition and is a national winner for his design of a food waste reduction app. He has won £1000 of equipment for the school and, along with friends, visited the Houses of Parliament in November, to celebrate his ingenious idea.

If you are looking to purchase a Christmas tree, please consider going to Stonepitts Farm and make sure you show them an electronic copy of our newsletter which can be found at www.shorehamvillageschool.net in the latest news section. For every tree bought they will donate £2 to our school as well as provide you with a beautiful tree. If you would like details and directions go to www.stonepitts.com . Stonepitts will be supporting Demelza Hospice Care for Children this year and will donate a beautiful tree to the school which the children will decorate and it will be taken to the Church at the end of term.

We are always happy to hear from people who would be interested in volunteering to work with the pupils to hear readers or run a club, or for those who could bring skills to the Governing Body that will help to lead the school strategically to further improve. If you would like to find out more about how you can help your village school in this way, please contact me via the school office; all volunteers are subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service Check with the police and go through an induction and training programme.

We wish everyone in the village a peaceful and healthy, merry Christmas.

Mrs Gillian Lovatt-Young, Headteacher

SHOREHAM GAZETTE INFORMATION

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POSTAL GAZETTE

You may order and pay for your postal Gazette from Pauline Clark paulineshoreham@gmail.com

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VILLAGE DIARY FOR DECEMBER AND JANUARY

December

3 Dec	Shoreham Society AGM and talk	Village Hall	7.30pm
4 Dec	Henry Desmond Orchestra	The Stag	7.30pm
7 Dec	WI Christmas lunch	The Crown	
9 Dec	Community Coffee morning	Village Hall	10am – 12 noon

January

4 Jan	WI Soup Lunch and meeting	Village Hall	12.45for 1pm
13 Jan	Community Coffee Meeting	Village Hall	10am – 12 noon
21 Jan	Shoreham Historical Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm

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Shoreham Pavilion Available for Hire

A fully accessible, beautiful, wooden building with central reception space, kitchen and changing rooms set overlooking the school playing fields and Spellers' Wood.

The facility is ideal for evening or weekend events, adult or children's learning or music groups, and as a meeting room for social groups. The Changing Rooms are available to hire separately in conjunction with use of the field.

For all enquiries, please contact the School Office on 01959 522228.



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