Welcome to the second of our Newsletters. Many of you were kind enough to say that you found the first edition cheering and a good way of connecting at a time when that is so hard for so many.

Nature has exploded around us and everyone I talk to is very appreciative of how lucky we are to have access to safe outdoor space even if for many of you at the moment that is limited to a back garden or a front doorstep.

Our community of volunteers and those of you we are supporting continues to grow. The family is more than 50 strong now and the shopping and prescriptions continue to whizz around the parish.

We have thought hard about finding something upbeat for us all to share as a village. The tulips are still talked about!

So listen up and please make a note of your advance invitation over the page to our May Day Tea & a Chat. Do ‘join’ and help us to bring this ambitious idea to life. And a huge thanks to Paula at the Little Bake Shop from the Parish for offering cakes for delivery to those of you we drop off shopping and prescriptions to.

Do remember to mail any suggestions for future editions to LCAV@herstmonceuxparish.org.uk

And meanwhile stay safe and try to keep smiling.

Pippa
Hello again one and all. Despite all of the challenges we are going through, hasn’t it been wonderful to see so much sunshine outside our windows?

Work at the Parish Council is still ticking over although some activities have had to draw to a temporary halt. Planning applications from Wealden are filtering through, albeit on a fairly minimal basis, with the Parish Councillors sending comments by email which I collate and forward to Wealden. Virtual Parish Council meetings are going forward now via a process called Zoom. I am planning a couple of practice meetings before we go live!!

If you have access to the internet, I am keeping the parish council website https://www.herstmonceuxparish.org.uk/ updated with useful information – do check it out and keep in touch. If anyone has pictures of the Parish area, please feel free to email these as I would love to create a residents’ photo gallery on the website. I promise to credit the photographer too!

Unfortunately we have had to indefinitely postpone parish VEDay75 planned activities for the Friday to Sunday Bank Holiday weekend, but this doesn’t mean we still can’t mark the event with a stay at home ‘street party’, decorating our windows with red, white and blue items and maybe a picnic in the garden or our lounge! Recipe suggestions welcome!

Thinking of everybody and hope you are all keeping safe and well.

Best Wishes, Clare the Clerk

A SEASONAL POEM

NOTHING is so beautiful as spring –
When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;
Thrush’s eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;
The glassy peartree leaves and blooms, they brush
The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush
With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

From Spring
by Gerard Manley Hopkins
Suggested by Pierrot Lee.
Do send ideas for future editions.

CLERK’S CORNER
GETTING INVOLVED

So many locals have responded with energy and determination to the calls for scrubs for the NHS. Thanks to every one of you. Here is one case study from Cowbeech. There are so many other great stories out there. Keep up the stitching!

“The East Sussex seamstresses are trying to get 750 sets of scrubs made as well as other useful items. I was contacted by Karen, who some of you will know, full of enthusiasm as she explained that a lot of NHS now want to wear scrubs (usually the preserve of theatre and casualty staff) instead of their uniforms. More comfortable, safer and easier to launder! And they asked the stitchers in communities all over the country to help. I didn’t need much persuasion to get my sewing machine out and get stitching!

I started off making laundry bags out of old cotton duvet covers and sheets while waiting for the scrubs pattern. The laundry bags are the idea of a nurse who worried that handling the clothes she had worn all day once back home was an unnecessary risk to her family. So key workers now change at work, pop the scrubs into the bags and the whole bag goes in a boil wash – making it safer for everyone.

Whatever type of stitcher you are, your skills can be used to make bags, head bands (due to medical staff ending up with very sore ears wearing face masks all day) and scrubs. In these challenging times it is great to feel that we are helping in some small way without even leaving our homes! Please contact me if you are interested in getting involved and I will help and support you by phone.”

Colette on mollylethbridge@btinternet.com on behalf of Cowbeech hub of The East Sussex seamstresses.

And hand sanitiser...Villages are full of surprises – and imagine Herstmonceux's surprise and delight at the start of the virus outbreak, when we turned out to have among our community Michelle, a one woman hand sanitiser factory! In those early weeks (doesn’t that seem a long time ago) Michelle generously dropped off free bottles to many very worried people, and to us, helping our volunteers to stay safe. She continues to work day and night and take orders round the village and has recently donated a batch of PPE to the Sussex Resilience Forum which is supplying frontline workers. Thank you Michelle.

QUIZ QUESTION!

Last time’s answer. The connection here is through actor Ralph Fiennes. He is a descendant of Sir Roger Fiennes who fought with Henry V at Agincourt and in 1415 obtained a license to turn his existing manor House into Herstmonceux Castle. The castle remained in the hands of the Fiennes family until sold by Baron Dacre in 1708. Two families who also have roads named after them where some of you live!

And this week’s question.

There is a connection between the West African state of Sierra Leone and Herstmonceux. Do you know what it is?
GUIDELINES

REMEMBER the message for us all remains the same, and as important as ever.
Government and NHS advice is to stay at home. For those who are vulnerable and ‘shielded’ during the outbreak you should stay at home at all times. Do not leave your home to buy food, collect medicine or take exercise - neighbours and family may be able to help with shopping. If not please call the helpline on 07934 712707.

If you are worried about your own symptoms or other health issues, visit NHS 111 online or, if you cannot get help online, call 111.

Staying at home and reducing contact with other people can be hard. So be sure to stay in touch with relations and friends over the phone or on social media. Spend time doing things you enjoy, and if you can, take some light exercise at home. Remember this situation is temporary and by staying at home you are helping to protect yourself and others.

FOODBANK

Thanks so much to everyone who has donated so far - either items in store or a bit extra on the weekly shopping bill. Everything is passed on to Hailsham Foodbank via our Herstmonceux Foodbank rep and the generosity is much appreciated. The need continues at a very high level. We’ll get an update from them for the next newsletter.

LOCAL SERVICES

Remember we are still keen to highlight in the newsletter some of the trusted local services working so hard to keep people safe, fed, and otherwise looked after in such unusual conditions. Not everyone is on Facebook or has access to a computer so please feel free to use our upcoming ‘newsletter message board’.

PHARMACY DELIVERIES

Many of you are now very familiar with Angie’s wonderful team of volunteers who pick up and deliver prescriptions from Herstmonceux pharmacy, both morning and afternoon. Please call the helpline on 07934 712707 and do make sure your prescription is ordered and confirmed as ready to collect.

Prescriptions will be left at your door observing social distancing policies and we must witness your collection otherwise the delivery will be returned to the Pharmacy.

Angie Creasey, Volunteer pickup co-ordinator

Please pass on this newsletter and the helpline number 07934 712707 to anyone you believe may need our services.
No request too small!