



SUMMER 2010

Cuckfield

REVIEW

The Importance of Being Earnest

Rain or Shine Theatre Company have been bringing their performances to the Recreation Ground in Cuckfield for the best part of ten years. Always an immensely successful evening, the company's mission is to entertain and educate at an affordable price through the medium of classical theatre.

This year, on Friday 6th August, they invite you to an evening of engaging entertainment performing one of the greatest comedies of all time, Oscar Wilde's classic comedy of manners, morals and morality - The Importance of Being Earnest!

When two Victorian gentlemen assume the name of 'Ernest' to win the affections of two ladies, both determined to marry a man of that name, the scene is set for hilarious confusion in a world of handbags, perambulators, cucumber sandwiches, muffins, butlers, the English upper class, and of course, that theatrical tour de force – Lady Bracknell.

The grounds open at 6 pm, so everyone can come along and enjoy a pre-show



picnic in the lovely grounds of Cuckfield Recreation Ground, ready for the show to begin at 7.30 pm. Make sure you bring some seating and remember English summer evenings can get chilly so bring an extra jacket!

The tickets are priced at £12, £10 concessions and £6 children. Tickets can be purchased either on-line at www.ticketweb.co.uk or direct from the Parish Council offices at The Queen's Hall. (Tel: 01444 451610).

(If it's wet, we simply move to the Queen's Hall right next door to the park and enjoy the performance there instead!).

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REFUSE BINS

The Parish Council is aware that when the new refuse service was introduced it was very difficult for some residents, particularly those living in older properties within the Conservation Area, to find anywhere to site the two large bins (one for re-cycling and one for landfill) at their property. These large bins are very unsightly and now seem to form a permanent feature in parts of the village.

However, there is a solution to the problem as Mid Sussex District Council can offer a bag collection and a box for re-cycling if there is nowhere suitable to site the bins – an offer that has already been taken up by several residents.

If you would like to help to keep Cuckfield looking at its best, do contact the Refuse & Recycling Team at Mid Sussex District Council on 01444 477440 or email wastematters@midsussex.gov.uk to arrange an alternative type of collection. If required, the Parish Council Office is also happy to provide further assistance.

SPEEDWATCH Get a feel for scale of the problem

After an hour's training by the community police in Haywards Heath in April, a small but dedicated team have started to carry out Speedwatch monitoring on Whitemans Green, Cuckfield. After risk assessment to identify the safest spot to set up our monitoring and some organising of calendars, we were ready to roll at the end of May.

Our initial session was an eye opener. Not only did we discover how fast and organised you have to be to record the speed, registration, make, model and colour of a speeding car but we were stunned by the sheer number of vehicles speeding along Whitemans Green. In our first 30 minute session, on a quiet weekend evening, we logged 15 cars doing in excess of 35 mph - with the fastest doing 45mph ... 15 mph over the speed limit ... despite the sight of people wearing florescent jackets and pointing a speed gun at them. What would they do if we weren't there?

This number excluded quite a few vehicles that we were simply not fast enough to record. Needless to say we're much better at it now, although sadly our top clocked speed has increased to a whopping 49 mph. Generally the response from motorists, cyclists and pedestrians has been very positive and supportive. Unfortunately a minority have seen fit to show their disgust at our bid to make the road safer for all who travel along it – including them. This has only served to strengthen our resolve to address the problem.

What has been interesting is seeing the effect that one car travelling within the speed limit can have on speeding traffic. It only takes one vehicle to travel at 30mph or less for all the cars behind to be forced to also stick to the speed limit. With this in mind I would encourage local people to pay particular attention to the speed limit throughout Cuckfield as this simple step will have a genuine effect on the speed of traffic through our village. We have another three neighbours lined up to take the speedwatch training but as

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many hands make light work, if you are interested in joining us please contact Helen at helen@planetmonty.com. And if you are passing, a friendly wave will make our day!

BURIAL RECORDS

The Parish Council is delighted to announce that the burial records for the parish cemetery have now been electronically scanned and they will soon be available for all to view, either at the museum or on our website. This was partly funded by a donation from the Edith Payne Library Trust. The Trustees felt that this was something that would be for the benefit of all the village and that Edith Payne herself would have approved of securing this information safely for future generations. We are most grateful to them for their generosity.

The records start in 1855 and still continue in the same format today. They are large handwritten books and give a fascinating glimpse into the life and death of the people of Cuckfield in the past. Just having a quick glance through shows the enormous number of child deaths and not just those from the poorer families. The doctors and lawyers were not exempt.

Even as late as the 1950s there were numerous stillbirths recorded whereas nowadays even very early babies often survive. As a piece of local history these books are an amazing view of village life with addresses and occupations given. We hope this will be a great boon to both family and local historians in Cuckfield.

THE TALBOT – a landmark building

During Cuckfield's heyday as a staging post on the London to Brighton coach road between 1800 and 1830 a High Street alehouse called The Hound was rebuilt and enlarged to become The Talbot Inn. (A talbot was a large white hunting dog, possibly purely heraldic.)

The Talbot became very busy as a coaching inn catering, together with the King's Head, for no less than 60 coaches a day and the two inns provided stabling for some 50 horses. Until 1816, Cuckfield was on all three major routes from London to Brighton and it was also a stage on the cross country Horsham to Hastings road.

Coach travel reduced

dramatically in the early 1840's when the railway line through Haywards Heath was completed. Coaches could not compete with the novelty, speed and comparative comfort of rail travel and Cuckfield's heyday was over. (For more information see Cuckfield Museum's permanent display.) However, the Talbot continued to flourish throughout the 19th century, until the building of the Queen's Hall in 1897, as a popular venue for dances, concerts, lectures, debates, parties and meetings. By 1850, the premises were much larger than they are today, extending to the Corner House courtyard over what are now shops and flats. The local magistrate's court was also housed, until 1888, in the large first floor assembly room, with its distinctive three tall windows overlooking the High Street. Today, a transformation is underway at The Talbot. Cuckfield residents, James Amico, Tracey and Jonny Lea and the team (owners of the Half Moon at Warninglid) have taken on the ownership of the pub and a tasteful transformation is promised. We await the re-opening with great interest!

Selling or Letting your home?



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CUCKFIELD CARRIER BAG – make Cuckfield plastic bag free!

Cuckfield Local has produced a Community Bag, an ethically sourced Fairtrade cotton bag which we hope will become a 'must have' for all Cuckfieldians.

The bag is being sold by local traders for just £1. As well as showing that you support the preservation of wildlife and the local environment in general, we believe that you will not be wanting to be seen shopping without one - or several! Please do support this initiative and buy your Cuckfield Carrier Bag soon from any of numerous outlets in the village. Happy shopping!
Stephen Blanch

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

The Village Design Statement group held a workshop on Saturday 19th June at the Queen's Hall. People were asked to explore what they value most about the different parts of Cuckfield, its buildings, spaces and individuality. Then, using photographs from the earlier survey of the area, people wrote down their ideas

and thoughts about the important characteristics that define the village under three headings of 'landscape setting', 'settlement pattern' and 'buildings'. Highlighted subjects included the importance of the many footpaths within Cuckfield and the importance of protecting the countryside surrounding the village. Various other ideas came forward, including an underground car park! If you haven't been able to take part so far, and want to add your ideas to assist with the Statement, you will have your chance a bit later on when we send out a questionnaire to all the residents of Cuckfield and Brook Street. Do make sure you respond as it is really important that we have the support of the whole community – we want the document to make a real impact on planning policy for the future.

NOISE!

Until the end of August, Mid Sussex District Council will have an out of hours noise service operating from 9pm until 2am on Friday/Saturday nights and on Bank Holidays. Details on the MSDC website.

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The Parish Council Office in the Queen's Hall is open from 10am–4pm each Monday, Wednesday and Friday

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