

BACS

Newsletter April 2006 No. 51

Benenden Amenity and Countryside Society

Dates for your Diary:

Benenden Hospital Visit – Monday 27th March, 7.30pm
Spring Walk – Sunday 7th May, 2.30pm

Benenden Primary School – The view of the BACS committee:

The BACS committee would like to raise the profile of the debate which is currently taking place on the proposed sites for a new village primary school. The committee is in total agreement on the need for a new school in Benenden, but is concerned that the site which is eventually selected should not damage the character and balance of the village.

There was a detailed discussion on the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council proposals at a recent committee meeting. At this meeting, concern was expressed that site 8 on the Glebe Field could lead to increased levels of traffic through The Street. Concern was also expressed that the high profile of a school on site 8 would disturb the special nature of the village. In addition, adopting site 8 appears to take away an important village amenity as well as the rights of enjoyment of the footpaths which cross the site.

The committee felt that advantage should be taken of the larger site available in site 1, which is north of The Street and with access from New Pond Road. It was agreed that site 1 has the advantage of being tucked away, whilst not being too far removed from the centre of the village. Adopting site 1 should result in less traffic in The Street, and the separation of the pedestrian and vehicle access to this site would make it safer for families walking to school. In addition, with a larger site there would be more scope for future school expansion.

After full discussion, five committee members voted for site 1. One committee member voted for site 8 as proposed on the Glebe Field. One committee member voted for site 8 as amended avoiding the Glebe Field. The final committee member was absent. The BACS committee will be submitting its views to the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

VISIT BENENDEN HOSPITAL MUSEUM WITH BACS

MONDAY 27th MARCH AT 7.30pm

To commemorate the centenary of Benenden Hospital, and to promote awareness of the hospital to local residents, BACS has organised a private visit to the Hospital Museum.

SOME TICKETS STILL AVAILABLE

£5 A HEAD – REFRESHMENTS INCLUDED

ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS FASCINATING MUSEUM

Directions from Benenden: Turn right after the main hospital building, into Stepney Ford Lane, and then turn first left. The museum is at the end of this road.

FOR TICKETS PLEASE CALL ALAN MILNE ON 240819

(Or email: alanmilne@chartsec.co.uk)

AGM report:

The 18th Annual General Meeting of the Benenden Amenity and Countryside Society took place Wednesday 22nd February in the Benenden Village Hall. There were 34 members present. The meeting began with Alan Milne presenting his chairman's report, after which Dick Hill presented the treasurer's report. Alan Milne was then re-elected as chairman, Angela Lloyd-Jones was re-elected as secretary and Dick Hill was re-elected as treasurer. The remaining committee members were then also re-elected to serve on the committee for another year.

Following the formal part of the meeting the deputy director of Benenden Hospital, Jane Abbott, gave an extremely interesting talk on the history of Benenden Hospital, and how it has evolved from a TB hospital to the more general hospital it is today. The talk covered a wide variety of issues ranging from the MRSA illness found in so many hospitals today (but not Benenden), to the widening of the hospital membership criteria and the recent restructuring which has taken place.

The talk was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Roger Lake thanked Jane Abbott for her interesting and informative talk and a donation was presented to the hospital welfare fund.

Spring Walk:

The BACS spring walk will take place on 7th May, starting at 2.30pm, and will take in the Sissinghurst Castle estate. As usual, there will be the option of taking a shorter route for those who would prefer this. We will meet in the Castle car park and dogs will be welcome for this walk. Please contact Alan Milne for further information.

Planning Matters:

The Committee continues to look at planning applications for the benefit of all in Benenden. Natalie Blakemore is now responsible for monitoring all planning applications. A summary of planning applications can be found on the Parish noticeboard in the village centre, and details can be seen at the Borough Council Offices in Cranbrook.

If you have any concerns about a planning application near you, please contact a committee member who will be able to raise your concerns at the next committee meeting.

Amenity Refuse Collection:

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council organises the schedule for amenity refuse vehicle, which visits the Parish for three hours every fortnight, on a Saturday morning. For your information, the dates and venues of this service for the next three months, are printed below. The vehicle is accessible from 8am until 11am, and this is the same every fortnight.

April	May	June
Sat 8 th – Iden Green Crossroads Sat 22 nd – Cherryfields, Benenden	Sat 6 th – Iden Green Crossroads Sat 20 th – Benenden Village Hall	Sat 4 th – Iden Green Crossroads Sat 18 th – Cherryfields, Benenden.

Subscriptions:

The subscription for 2006 is £3 for an individual or £5 for a family. Alternatively, you can pay £50 for life membership. If you know of anyone who may like to join BACS, please contact David Grief, who will ensure a form is sent. Perhaps you can encourage friends and neighbours to join. Members receive a quarterly newsletter, which contains details of events being organised by BACS, and items of local interest from around the parish.

Your committee:

Alan Milne – Chairman

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Dick Hill – Treasurer

Columbanus, Off Standen Street, Iden Green, TN17 4HR
Tel: 240517

Angela Lloyd-Jones – Secretary

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David Grief – Membership

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Natalie Blakemore – Planning

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Roger Lake – Parish Council Rep.

Benenden Barn, The Street, Benenden, TN17 4BZ
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Gill Snow - Publicity

Orchards, Mounts Hill, Benenden, TN17 4ET
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William Davies - Newsletter

Weald House, Iden Green, TN17 4HH
Tel/Fax: 240723, Email: wgd@wealdhouse.co.uk

The Benenden Home Guard, 1940:

This is the eighth of the Home Guard extracts; there will be one more, for the last weeks of 1940. They are from a record made by Collingwood Ingram (of The Grange, now Collingwood Grange) of the talks he gave to the men when he was the local commander of the Home Guard. The first meeting was on 23rd May 1940. This are not the full record and where sections have been omitted this is shown by In this extract, it is clear that the Commander was having some difficulty maintaining enthusiasm.

Once again, we are extremely grateful to Ernie Pollard for researching the topic and compiling this article.

Sunday October 20th 1940

A fortnight ago I told you that the Military authorities regarded the night work of the Home Guard as of great importance. There have been indications that some of you do not fully appreciate this fact. Because the nights are dark & can see very little: because the chances of meeting an enemy agent are comparatively remote; because the likelihood of enemy parachutists landing between dusk & dawn is highly improbable – none of these things are any reason for relaxing our vigilance. At present we are regarded by the Government as essentially a night force. Please remember that the country expects the Home Guard to be on alert during the hours of darkness – to be in readiness for any emergency.....

The final of the Molotoff Bomb Throwing competition has not yet been decided. Capt. Phillips, who is running this competition, has an announcement to make in respect of this, after which, the available leather belts and anklets will be issued, as before in alphabetical order.

October 27th 1940

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It is reported that the Germans are now using propaganda balloons. These carry a cardboard box containing leaflets. If this box is intact it is dangerous, due to a small charge which is exploded by clockwork to distribute the leaflets.

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I am sorry I missed the final of the Molotoff Throwing Competition but last night I had to retire to bed with a chill & was not feeling well enough to attend this morning. I would like to congratulate the winner - W. Arnold - and have much pleasure in presenting him with the prize. I hope Arnold's skilful throwing will enable him to deal effectively with any enemy tank that may be lured in one of Mr Clegg's ambushes.

Next week the instruction classes will be held for the different sections on the following days.

Monday Mobile Section & Reserves

Tuesday N^o.1 (Goddards Green) & N^o2 (Colebarn) Sections

Wednesday N^o3 (Pullington) & N^o4 (Dingleden) Sections

Thursday N^o5 (Iden Green), N^o6 (Skullsgate) & N^o7 (Mounts) Sections

As before they will all be held at 6.45 p.m. Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at the Memorial Hall – Thursday at the Assembly Rooms.

Now I want you to realise that these lectures have been organised entirely for your benefit & it is therefore up to you to make the most of them. The Officers delivering them have been organised entirely for your benefit & it is up to you to make the most of them. The Officers delivering them have studied their subjects with considerable care & have devoted much valuable time in their preparation. They have not done this for their own amusement – they have done it solely for your sake – that you may learn something about modern methods of warfare. We all know German troops have been very highly trained – we cannot as spare time soldiers, hope to attain anything like their standard of efficiency – but we can, & should, do our best to help turn the Home Guard into a really formidable force. Those of you who have been prevented from attending these lectures on the days when they were given to your particular Sections will have a last opportunity of attending them this week – when they are being given to other Sections. I will repeat the programme Monday – Bombs & bomb throwing: Tuesday – Close Warfare: Wednesday – Anti-tank tactics: Thursday – Musketry instruction.

November 10th 1940

I have been away for a week, visiting a part of England that seemed very far from the War [believed to have been grouse-shooting! E.P.] – but even there Road Blocks had been placed in readiness for any emergency. I must admit they looked a little incongruous by the side of these wild mountain roads winding over empty moorlands that stretch up to the snow-covered crests. But they served to show that even here, the Cumberland fell farmers had answered the country's call & had, almost to a man, joined the Home Guard. If we, in this parish, form a somewhat scattered community, & some of us occasionally have a few miles to travel, you can take it from me that these Lazonby volunteers have twice or thrice as far to go for their [unclear] Home Guard duties. And, remember, they do this without the constant that we get that there is a war on. I don't suppose they have ever heard a siren & I am sure a bomb has not been dropped within fifty miles of them.

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[on anti-aircraft fire]

Now here is an extremely useful tip for gauging the amount of "lead" you will have to give to a machine crossing in front of you. Stretch your left arm out at full length and spread the fingers of your up-lifted hand. The width between the first and little fingers will give you the 12° angle which should always be allowed as a "lead" for a fast moving 'plane. Thus if your first finger is on the nose of the machine, the fire position ahead will be occupied by your little finger. Obviously this method cannot be applied at the time – the requisite amount of "lead" must be learnt by practice beforehand. All ranks should therefore practice with their outstretched hands against tree-tops, clouds & etc. until the measurement becomes instinctive.

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17th November 1940

In future our Battalion will be known as the 23rd Hawkhurst Battalion.