

PEMBURY

Your VILLAGE newsletter / 28

JUNE 1981 NO.

*From over the vales,
Far over the ling,
Bells are ringing
To spring.
From blossomed bough
Lilts their cuckoo-ing,
To spring.
Listen to the rill
Rushing, gushing, hurrying,
Hurrying into spring*

Terrence St. John
17 Belfield Road

contents

EDITORIAL.....	2
IN BRIEF.....	3
CLERK'S REPORT.....	4
ON STAGE.....	5
PEMBURY CHEST.....	6
FOUL!!.....	9
FOOTPATHS.....	10
BULLY-OFF.....	11
QUEEN OF THE MAY.....	12
PEMBURY'S MARTYR.....	15
MEETING THE NEIGHBOURS.....	16
VILLAGE ORGANIZATIONS.....	17
DIARY.....	19

VIEWPOINT

Parish Council & Party Politics

Pembury Parish Council has 13 members. Six stood for election as Conservatives and a seventh was co-opted last year following a member's resignation. The remaining six, whatever their private political views may be, stood and were elected as independents.

If party affiliations had any effect on members' thinking one would expect to see this in operation during council debates. In fact on Pembury Parish Council party politics do not enter into its deliberations. There are, quite simply, no discussions in which members take party political lines.

Why should they? There is nothing party political about the provision of recreational amenities, the upkeep of burial grounds and allotments, the maintenance of street lighting, the care of footpaths or the oversight of planning applications, which together form the sum total of the council's concern.

The reason for stressing this obvious fact is that readers of the latest issue of "Contact", the organ of Pembury Conservatives, might be forgiven for thinking that parish council decisions are arrived at—and the inference is that they are wisely arrived at for this reason—because of an in-built Conservative majority.

This is just not true. For instance every councillor believes that something should be done to solve the traffic problems in Belfield and Canterbury Roads, although individually they may differ as to the right solution. No member is opposed to the two by-pass schemes. No one raised his voice in favour of further expenditure which would have raised the parish rate. It wasn't any party line but

common prudence which put a ban on any project which would have added to the rate burden.

And, incidentally, it is not the view of the parish council that residents such as Mr. and Mrs. Pankhurst of Canterbury Road, who petition Kent County Council to do something about the traffic hazards in their road should be regarded as wasting public money by their persistence. Why, indeed, do we pay rates to the county if not to receive service in return? And part of that service is surely the investigation of a constitutionally-expressed complaint.

"Contact" was adrift, too, on the question of the boat being lifted into Mr. Abbott's back garden in Camden Avenue. Mr. Abbott made all the correct approaches to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council for permission to use the car park for the operation and permission was duly given. This information was just as available to "Contact" as to the parish council.

Political parties are perfectly free to put forward their views. That is one of the aspects of a democracy. But they should not imply that they have a monopoly of common sense in the decisions of a small local authority in which those of strong political convictions or none discuss matters which in the true sense are parochial.

IN BRIEF



The Parish Council has received confirmation from Mr. Patrick Mayhew, M.P. that the A21 Pembury by-pass, scheduled to start in 1984, is now in the Department of Transport's firm programme of works. This news means that, barring accidents, work should start in about three years' time.

* * *

Kent County Council, which is responsible for the construction of the B2015 by-pass from near Downingbury Farm to Woodsgate Corner, has also confirmed to the Parish Council that work is planned to start during the year 1982/83.

* * *

A welcome addition to village amenities is the establishment of a bottle bank on the Camden car park. The bank, one of ten in the Tunbridge Wells Borough area, is provided by a commercial concern which has undertaken to pay the Borough Council £1,000 a year for the ten banks and to undertake all removal responsibilities. When the scheme was inaugurated a spokesman for the glass industry stressed that there was a significant saving in energy in re-processing glass compared with manufacturing it from the basic raw materials.

* * *

The county council is issuing the necessary statutory notices regarding the placing of double yellow lines along part of the north-eastern side of the entrance to Belfield Road (the right-hand side as you enter the road). When the Parish Council first asked for this restriction a year ago, to reduce congestion and facilitate the entry of emergency vehicles, the county authority would not recognise the need. But the Parish Council stuck to its guns and lines should appear in due course.

* * *

The Mayor of Tunbridge Wells's annual Rosebowl competition for council house gardens is being held again this year. Pembury can nominate one entry. Tenants who wish to enter for the competition should notify the Council's Clerk by July 17th.

YOUR CLERK REPORTS

My Council's Amenities Committee is always eager to try out new ideas, the introduction of hockey on the Lower Green Recreation Ground for the first time being one good example.

They were, therefore, more than pleased when a director of Circus de Reszke, a small family circus based locally at Golden Green near Tonbridge, offered to present their circus on the Recreation Ground. After investigating the safety measures which will be taken, and being satisfied in this respect, my members accepted the offer and a date – the week commencing August 10th – was agreed.

The programme, I understand, has a running time of approximately 1½ hours and includes performing dogs, goats, ponies, snakes, stilt walking, fire eating, clowning, juggling, an illusion act and, possibly, an African lioness. So you see there should be something for everyone. It could become an annual event if it is successful.

While talking of annual events, I am sure you were sad to hear that because of difficulties, described elsewhere in this Newsletter, the annual Fete on the Recreation Ground will not take place this summer. However, my Council's Amenities Committee has invited Andrew's Fair to visit the Recreation Ground on Friday and Saturday July 10th and 11th, so at least parishioners will be able to join in and enjoy all the fun of the fair—let's hope our invitation is accepted.

Well, there are two ideas for the summer in Pembury. Have you any others you would like my members to discuss?

H. S. J. Plant
Clerk to the Council

ON

STAGE

Pembury Players, formed only in January, are staging their first public performance on June 12th and 13th in the Village Hall. At 8.00 p.m. each evening they will present Noel Coward's "Fumed Oak" and "Possession" by Laurence Housman – two one-act plays.

The group's first impact on the public was on May 2nd when it ran a May Dance in the Village Hall. Candle-lit tables, striking floral arrangements and Cyril Mapley's music combined to establish a charming social atmosphere. Though the attendance of about 60 people was less than had been hoped, those who came had an enjoyable time. Dancing was supplemented by a tasty supper, a raffle and a novel competition of bowling 10p pieces for a bottle of wine.

The dance was arranged to raise funds to pay for the presentation of the plays, because although theatrical performances can and should be self-financing, payments have to be made before the shows are put on. Thanks to the generosity of those attending and to Cyril Mapley, who returned part of his fee to help the Players, enough money was raised to pay the royalties for the June performances.

Since the society was formed it has held three play-reading meetings, arranged two theatre visits and rehearsed the two plays.

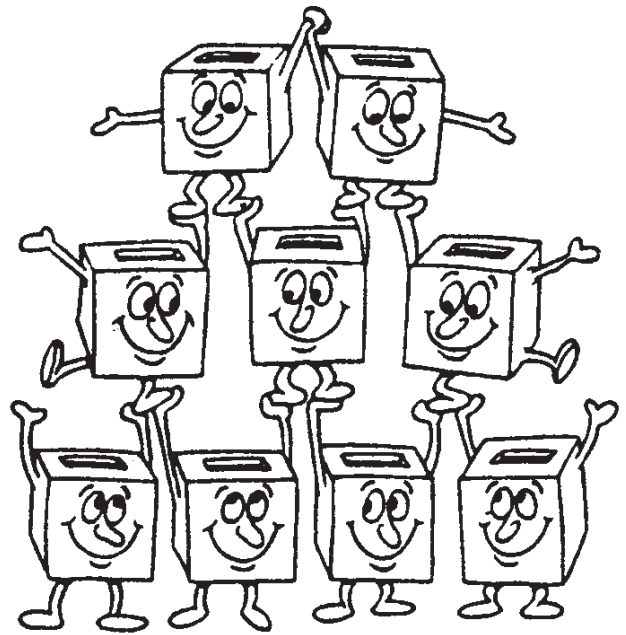
Membership at present is about 25. But more members will be welcome, including those who want to act and those who can help behind the scenes by building scenery and making costumes. At present the membership subscription is 50p plus a whip-round to cover hiring charges when a meeting is held in the Village Hall.

Mrs. H. Smith
Hon. Secretary

News from PEMBURY Chest

So there won't be a Village Fete this year. Although the attractions, including inter-pub sports, a miniature railway, pony rides, dancing and majorette displays, Morris dancing and a Fun Castle, had been arranged many months in advance, the crunch came when the committee sought the help of local organisations to run stalls and sideshows.

In mid-February 25 local organisations were invited to send representatives to a meeting on April 2nd at which they could outline the help their associations could give. Only six bodies sent representatives. Four others could not attend but indicated they would help. There were, in fact, more committee members than outside representatives at that meeting.



The remaining organisations were contacted after the meeting. Only two said they could help and only one apologised for not having replied—even if it was only “No”.

Faced with what appeared to be widespread apathy, the committee decided it would not go forward with arrangements for the Fete.

The event had been publicised as being in aid of improvements to amenities at the Village Hall—a cause, one would have thought, to command popular support since nearly everyone in the village uses the hall in the course of a year. But even this objective was not sufficiently attractive to warrant a concerted effort by Pembury organisations.

Committee members are only human. Since few people seemed to care, they wondered why they should bother. After all, it took two public meetings last autumn to get enough people to form a committee or, more correctly, to make up sufficient numbers to supplement the hard core of members who took over after the last crisis in 1977, when the existing committee resigned en bloc. Perhaps Pembury Chest should have taken the hint then and called the whole thing off.

By the time you read this a public meeting will have been held to decide the future—if that is the right term—of the fete committee. It is to be hoped something will have been saved from the wreck. It seems a pity that the enthusiasm of those who re-started the village fete in 1975 after a lapse of 28 years should have been dissipated so soon.

A public meeting was held on May 29th to discuss the future of the Chest and the Fete. Only 14 people turned up. It was agreed that £250 of the Chest's assets should be set aside and kept in trust by the Pembury Society—which kindly offered to do this—in case another fete committee should be formed in the future. The remainder of the Chest's money—around £500—will be given to the Parish Council's Village Hall improvement fund.

Robert Allen



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foul !!!

It is an offence to allow a dog to foul the public footpath, maximum penalty £50 – Borough Council bye-law.

Dogs must be kept on a leash – Parish Council notice at the Recreation Ground entrance.

*When you take Fido for a walk
Please bear in mind the regulations
Which say – this is not idle talk –
That footpaths are not comfort stations*

*And if he pulls upon the lead
And wants to answer Nature's urges,
The gutter is his friend in need
But not the pavement's grassy verges.*

*Please never let your dog be found
Evacuating, free and easy,
Upon the Recreation Ground
(It makes a lot of people queasy).*

*There's country paths and woodlands near
Where Fido can disport in freedom;
Ideal surroundings for him here
And loos a-plenty, should he need 'em.*

*O! doggy owner, I would urge,
Though you may think your pet's a beauty,
Should he foul pavement, park or verge
The council means to prosecute ye.*

R. A.

KEEPING THE FOOTPATHS *open*

Pembury Footpath Walkers is one of the newest organisations in the village. It was formed last year to encourage the use and protection of the many lovely footpaths in and around the village.

Care of footpaths had previously been included in the activities of the Pembury Society, which had done much to keep the footpaths open. But as time went on it was felt these matters would best be dealt with by a separate organisation solely concerned with the paths.

To gauge public support a steering committee was formed last summer with representatives from the Parish Council, the Pembury Society and the Ramblers' Association. As a result a display was mounted at last October's village exhibition.

The display attracted a lot of attention and we were pleased that over 60 parishioners gave in their names to support the proposed new body. In December the group was formally constituted at a public meeting in the Village Hall.

Within the parish there are 45 footpaths and bridleways totalling 21 miles. At 2.15 p.m. on the first Saturday every month we meet to take a walk of about three miles along one of these paths. With several members still in push-chairs we set a pace to suit all ages and sufficient for us all to enjoy a wide variety of scenery.

Paths lead through farms, fields, orchards and woods and every walk is like a nature study for young and old alike. It is somehow reassuring to think we are walking the same footpaths that previous villagers have used down the centuries. The streams we cross provide another link with the past since several were used to feed the hammer ponds built in connection with the ironworks once so common in the area.

While walking we note the condition of the paths and in conjunction with landowners have arranged several successful clearance parties, including a whole day at the picnic site on the Old Coach Road. When approaching a clearance group armed with a motley collection of implements, both ancient and modern, it is easy to see how Richard II felt when faced with the Peasants' Revolt!

We also have a way-marking programme. You may have seen the little yellow tags which indicate the direction and map number of the footpath.

So if you want to see herb robert or know the story behind Pig-Hanged-Man-Stile, or just want to fight the flab, look for our meeting dates on the diary page of this Newsletter. All you need is a pair of stout shoes and 50p for your annual membership (families 75p).

We look forward to seeing you.

Mike Tompsett
Secretary

Bully-Off at PEMBURY

Pembury Hockey Club recently completed the season in traditional style, with an annual meeting.

Nothing remarkable in that, except that the AGM marked the end of the club's very first season. And it was a season which saw it firmly established as providing an alternative sport for the eight-14-year-old boys and girls of Pembury.

From September to April, Sunday School and weather permitting, Sunday mornings in the Lower Green Road Recreation Ground have echoed to the clash of hockey sticks and the shouts of the young and agile being organised by the older and less so.

Establishing a hockey club in Pembury was given a tremendous boost by the active interest and support of the Parish Council and Mr. Brian Sands in particular. He was instrumental in obtaining for the club a £100 council loan to see it through its first season. The council also agreed to provide two junior pitches on the recreation ground. These have been looked after by the groundsman in very trying weather conditions.

As ever, parents have rallied round to assist with the club's organisation, fund-raising and a Christmas party.

During the season the junior club has built up an active membership of 34. Even frosty Sundays failed to deter some two dozen youngsters from gathering in the Rec. So far these outdoor sessions have been limited to coaching in basic skills, followed by practice matches. It is hoped to arrange some games against other clubs next season.

Danny Littlechild has been elected the first junior club captain and two ex-juniors, Mandy Kemp and Raymond Catt, have been elected to the committee and will help with coaching next season. The occasional indoor session is planned at the St. John's Sports Centre, where spectators can get an excellent bird's eye view of the progress made by the juniors.

Although last season's efforts were mainly concentrated on establishing the junior section, a start has been made in setting up a senior club. Three matches have been played and although one of the scores against approached cricket proportions, team members thoroughly enjoyed the games which were played in a very friendly spirit.

Stephen Bristow, who organised the junior coaching, has been elected the first senior captain of the club and has already arranged a number of matches for next season. The club owes him a great debt for his organising and coaching skills and, above all, his infectious enthusiasm. It has also benefited greatly from the goalkeeping and umpiring experiences of Mick O'Farrell, who despite umpiring regularly for Tunbridge Wells, has managed to find time to help get hockey established in Pembury.

Pembury Hockey Club looks forward to its second season with optimism. Why not get yourself a stick and come and bully off with us?

John Hawker
Chairman

'Queen of the may'

A large and appreciative audience watched boys and girls of Pembury Primary School's junior department give their annual Maypole and country dancing display on the Village Green on May 2nd.

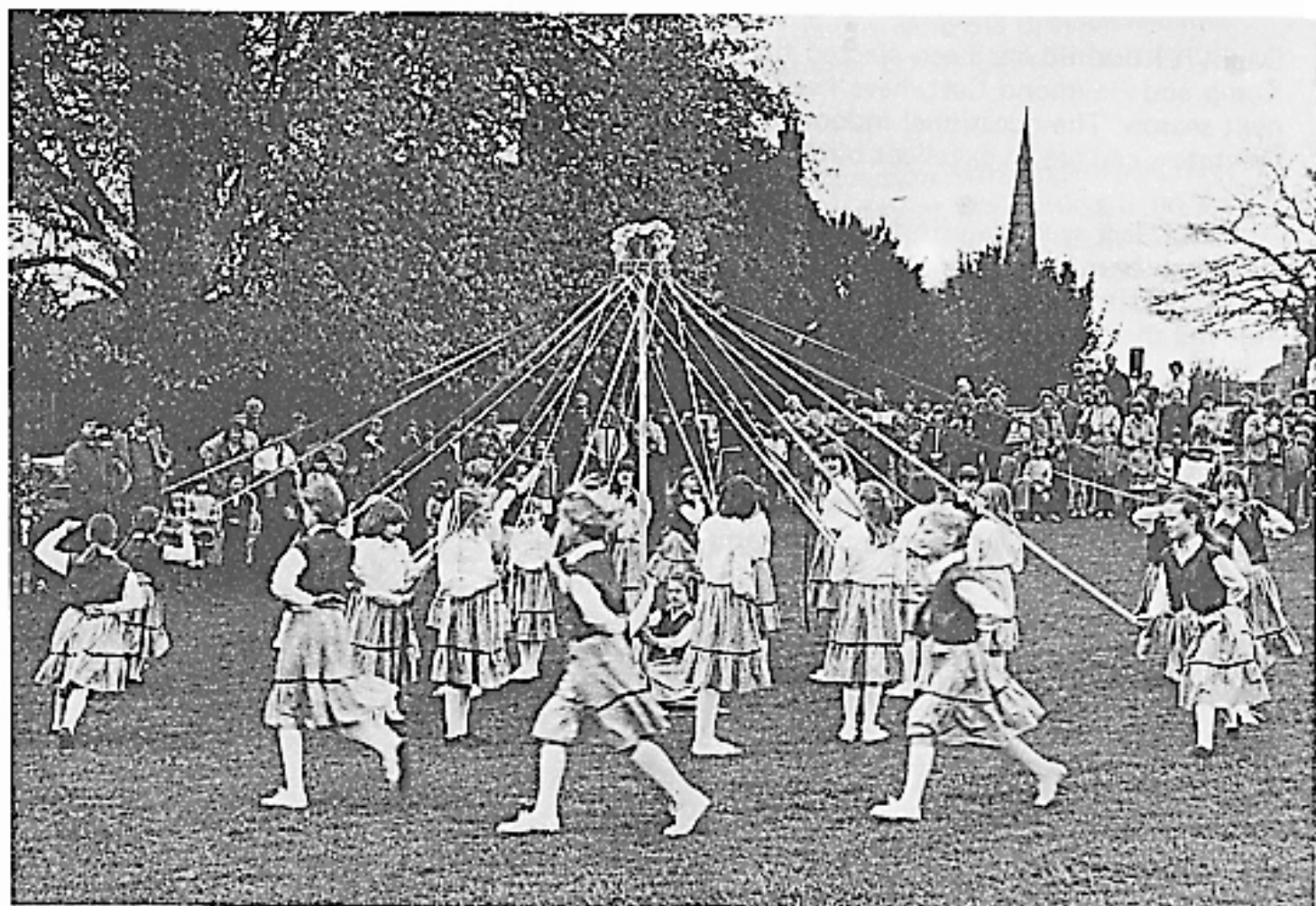
Although this was the third year the school had organised it, the event this year included the crowning of a Queen of the May—which it is intended will become a regular feature of this charming occasion.

This year's Queen was 11-year-old Simone Wildey who was crowned by one of her two pages, Damien Pratt, aged 10. Simone was chosen by members of the dance team.

Altogether 32 children danced in the display, which was organised by teacher Mrs. Mary Adams. Mr. Nick Gould coached the recorder players who marked the crowning of the Queen.

As always in such events there was an army of backstage workers—the mothers who made the Queen's robe and the dancers' colourful costumes.

(Photo: Courier)



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PEMBURY'S MARTYR

The horse trough on the Village Green bears the inscription: "To the memory of Margery Polley of Pembury who suffered martyrdom at Tonbridge AD 1555".

Perhaps you have idly wondered who Margery Polley was, where she lived, why she was martyred and how old she was.

Now someone whose love for Pembury began as a child has researched into the scant details of Margery's life and has written a charming little book on this unsung martyr's life.

Miss Helena Wadman, who now lives in Bexhill, spent most of her summer holidays as a child staying with her family at Pastheap Farm off the Hastings Road, the home of her grandfather Mr. George Martin. Mr. Martin was a prominent member of Pembury Free Church and his service as a deacon of the church is commemorated on a plaque in the building. Miss Wadman's mother was baptised at the church and she herself worshipped there during her holidays.

Miss Wadman fell in love with the countryside around and often saw the horse trough with its inscription. Throughout her life she wondered about Margery Polley and eventually decided to write a book about her.

She read Foxe's Book of Martyrs and other histories of Tudor times. Naturally enough, details of the day to day life of a simple country girl were not to be found, so Miss Wadman has skilfully interwoven fact and fiction in fleshing out the story.

But what does come through is the unflinching faith of a young woman at a time when the newly-established Protestant form of worship came under the threat of persecution authorised by the unbending Queen Mary. This tale of informers, denunciations and secret "police" finds a grim echo in our own troubled world.

Margery Polley lived with her parents, who farmed Pastheap. She married and was later widowed. She was arrested as a Protestant heretic in 1555 and a few weeks after being denounced by the then Bishop of Rochester as "an obstinate heretic and foolish woman" she was burned at the stake in Tonbridge. She was only about 30 years old and had done no harm to anyone.

Miss Wadman, who has written some stories and a play which her local Baptist Church produced last Easter, plans to sell the book on the Village Green on Saturday, September 12th when, dressed in Tudor costume, she will be helped by girls from Kent College, also in period dress.

In the meantime she hopes to visit Pembury and perhaps speak to local organisations about the events depicted in her book.

The book is priced at £1.50; half the proceeds will go towards a cause dear to Miss Wadman's heart—the Baptist Missionary Society's Operation Agri which helps Third World countries to develop their farming techniques.

MEETING the NEIGHBOURS

We have our problems in Pembury—excessive traffic, parking which causes difficulty on some roads, occasional vandalism.

But our neighbours have their worries, too, some of which spill over their borders and affect the quality of life in our village. It was with the aim of discussing some of our mutual concerns that representatives of the Parish Council met with their opposite numbers from Capel and Paddock Wood on March 17th.

No definite decisions were made at this informal meeting but it was obvious we were all concerned about the effect of certain long-term projects in our three areas.

For example, planning permission has been given for gravel extraction near Beltring and operations are expected to last for several years. Some of the resulting lorry traffic will go north but a great deal will travel via Paddock Wood or Pembury.

Capel, the parish most affected, is to try to ensure that transport is subject to as stringent restrictions as are compatible with the commercial working of the site.

This problem is linked with another topic discussed—the improvements to the B2015, including our own by-pass. The most contentious part of this scheme centres on Colts Hill where the county council is still undecided whether to widen the existing road or by-pass the hamlet. Everyone agreed that the by-pass plan, although more expensive, was preferable to widening the road through Colts Hill, which would make life there intolerable. The latest news is that the KCC is to look at the by-pass scheme again.

The revival of interest in the Channel Tunnel scheme is of concern to Paddock Wood which sees itself as a likely place for freight traffic destined for the South-East to off-load from rail to road, with obvious effects on Pembury.

Other topics touched on were the perennial gypsy problem and the funding of community centres. Recent Government legislation appears to mean that local authority and Government grants, which used to provide the bulk of the finance for such schemes will now be reduced to a mere 15 per cent of the total costs.

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PEMBURY

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The Editor would welcome any contributions for inclusion in the Newsletter.

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The views expressed in the Newsletter do not necessarily represent official Parish Council opinion or policy.

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Pembury 2439



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Henry S. J. Plant
16 The Coppice



Pembury 3459



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Mrs. Hildy Swinden,
6 Church Road.
Tel: Pembury 3778

Mr. Geoffrey Theobald,
79 Hastings Road.
Tel: Pembury 2055

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2 Middlefield. Tel: 3738

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57 Heskett Park. Tel: 3273
Finance: Mr. A. Bromwich,
The Lodge, Church Rd. Tel: 2865
Highways: Mr. A. Stuart-Robson
99 Ridgeway. Tel: 3843
Planning: Mr. D. Hawes-Richards,
54 Hastings Road. Tel: 2779
Public Relations: Mr. R. Allen,
37 Highfield Close. Tel: 2439

FOR YOUR DIARY

- JUNE** 25 Hort. Soc — Car trip to Hadlow College, meet Camden car park 7 p.m.
 29 Parish Council meeting — Highways, Planning, Public Relations
- JULY** 30 Darby & Joan Club — R.C. Hall 2 to 5 p.m.
 2 Afternoon W.I. — "The Butterfly Year of 1976" — Mrs. Hollies, V. Hall 2.30 p.m.
 3 Evening W.I. — V. Hall
 4 Footpath Walkers walk — start Stonecourt Lane 2.15 p.m.
 5 Hort. Soc. Coach trip to Rose Show, St. Albans — leave Green 9 a.m.
 9 Footpath Walkers waymarking party — start Camden car park 7 p.m.
 13 Hort. Soc. — Floral Art Group — V. Hall 8 p.m.
 14 Darby & Joan Club — Summer luncheon and garden party — V. Hall 1 p.m.
 18 Hort. Soc. — SUMMER SHOW — V. Hall 3 p.m.
 20 Parish Council meeting — V. Hall 8 p.m.
 27 Parish Council meeting — Amenities, Planning, Finance — V. Hall 8 p.m.
 28 Darby & Joan Club — R.C. Hall 2 to 5 p.m.
- AUG.** 1 Footpath Walkers walk — Start Camden car park 2.15 p.m.
 6 Afternoon W.I. — Members' meeting — V. Hall 2.30 p.m.
 7 Evening W.I. — Garden party & Barbecue — 22 Gimble Way
 10 Hort. Soc — Floral Art Group — V. Hall 8 p.m.
 11 Darby & Joan Club — R.C. Hall 2 to 5 p.m.
 25 Darby & Joan Club — R.C. Hall 2 to 5 p.m.
- SEPT.** 3 Afternoon W.I. — Winter Colour in the Garden, Mrs. J. Bowles — V. Hall 2.30 p.m.
 4 Evening W.I. — Old Tunbridge Wells, Mr. Sandbach — V. Hall
 5 Footpath Walkers walk — Start Bo-Peep corner 2.15 p.m.
 7 Parish Council meeting — Highways, Planning, Public Relations, V. Hall 8 p.m.
 8 Darby & Joan Club — Autumn outing to Bexhill — leave Royal Oak 2 p.m.
 14 Hort. Soc. Floral Art Group — V. Hall 8 p.m.
 19 Hort. Soc. AUTUMN SHOW — V. Hall 3 p.m.
 21 Parish Council meeting — V. Hall 8 p.m.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH SERVICES

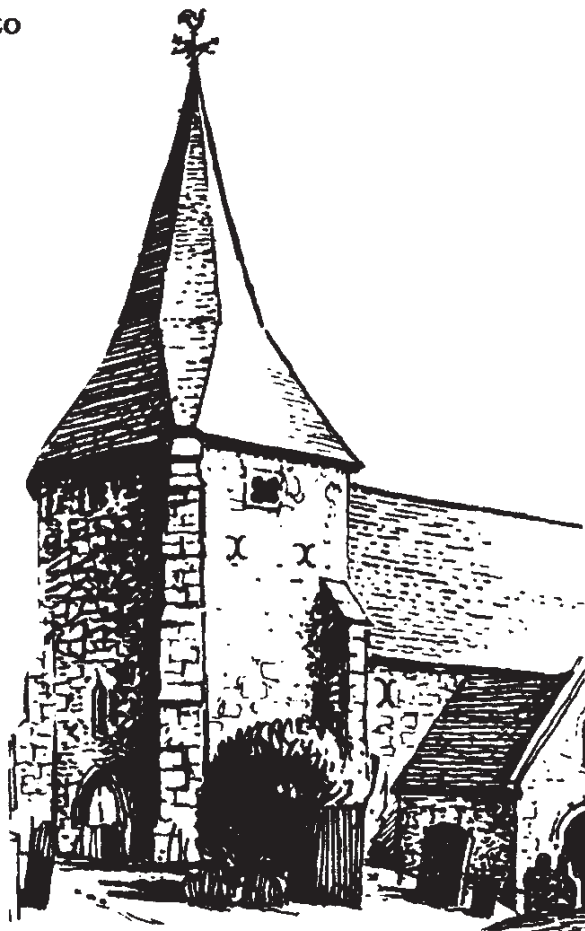
Upper Church

- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
 9.45 a.m. Parish Communion with Sermon
 10.00 a.m. Family Communion (last Sunday)
 11.30 a.m. Junior Church
 4.00 p.m. Evensong and Sermon
 5.00 p.m. Shortened Holy Communion (3rd Sunday)

Parish Church

- 8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (Second Sunday)
 11.15 a.m. Matins and Sermon
 11.15 a.m. Sung Communion with Sermon (4th Sunday)

Every Friday — W.I. Market — V.Hall 10.15 - 11.15 a.m.



(35p)

Every Monday — Pembury Old Tyme and Modern Dance Club — R.C. Hall — 7.45-10.15 p.m.

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