

# BACS

## Newsletter January 2005 No. 46

B e n e n d e n   A m e n i t y   a n d   C o u n t r y s i d e   S o c i e t y

### Dates for your Diary:

AGM – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2005, at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.  
Spring Walk – Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2005 (Provisional)

### Benenden Village Hall:

Members may have noticed that the redevelopment of the Benenden Village Hall is proceeding rapidly. The external work on the village hall extension has now finished, and internal work is proceeding on time and on budget. This is thanks a large number of generous donations and a wide variety of successful fund-raising events, including a barn dance and a garden open-day at Pypne Manor. When complete, the The Village Hall will have new toilets, new changing rooms and an office for the Parish Clerk, in which all parish records can be kept.

Help is still required, however, to pay for the proposed improvements to the sound, lighting, and the kitchen. The next fund-raising event is an evening performance by Jo Brand at the Tunbridge Wells Assembly Hall theatre, on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2005. Tickets are £16 a head, and are available from Robin Dalton Holmes, who can be contacted on 01580 240923 or robin.dh@virgin.net.

### AGM:

The BACS AGM will be held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on Wednesday 9 February 2005.

This year's speaker will be BACS member, John Hare, who is one of the world's leading explorers and adventurers. John was awarded the Lawrence of Arabia Gold Medal last year for exploration under hazardous circumstances. He will give an illustrated talk on his crossing of the Sahara by camel, from Lake Chad to the Mediterranean shores of Tripoli.

Light refreshments will be served during the evening, which is an important social event in Benenden's calendar. It is free, and all are welcome (especially newcomers), whether members of BACS or not.

### Spring Walk:

This years Spring walk has been scheduled for Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April. This is always a family event, and it is hoped this year's walk will provide an opportunity for children to see some recently born lambs. Dogs are always welcome, but must be kept on leads and under tight control when passing through sheep fields. More details will be printed in the next newsletter.

### 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.

January	February	March
Sat 15 <sup>th</sup> – Iden Green Crossroads Sat 29 <sup>th</sup> – Cherryfields, Benenden	Sat 12 <sup>th</sup> – Iden Green Crossroads Sat 26 <sup>th</sup> – Benenden Village Hall	Sat 12 <sup>th</sup> – Iden Green Crossroads Sat 26 <sup>th</sup> – Cherryfields, Benenden

### Planning Matters:

The Committee continues to look at planning applications for the benefit of all in Benenden. Ernie Pollard is 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.

### Subscriptions:

Membership this year remains at £2 for an individual and £5 for a family. Alternatively, you can purchase a life membership for a flat rate of £50. Subscriptions are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> January every year. Unless you have already paid for 2005, you should find a membership renewal form included with this newsletter. Please return your completed forms to Dick Hill in the envelope provided.

Alternatively, you can print an application form on the BACS website, which can be found at [www.benendenvillage.org.uk](http://www.benendenvillage.org.uk). You can also discover the origins and objectives of the society on this site, as well as read about upcoming BACS events.

We are currently trying to increase our 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**

Somers, Mounts Hill, Benenden, TN17 4ET  
Tel: 240819 Fax: 241109, Email: [alanmilne@chartsec.co.uk](mailto:alanmilne@chartsec.co.uk)

**Dick Hill – Treasurer**

Columbanus, Off Standen Street, Iden Green, TN17 4HR  
Tel: 240517, Email: [dandmhill@lineone.net](mailto:dandmhill@lineone.net)

**Angela Lloyd-Jones – Secretary**

West Winds, Cranbrook Road, Benenden, TN17 4EU  
Tel: 240354 Fax: 243064, Email: [atljones75@hotmail.com](mailto:atljones75@hotmail.com)

**David Grief – Membership**

Crit Hall, Cranbrook Road, Benenden, TN17 4EU  
Tel: 241772 Fax: 240772, Email: [david@grief.co.uk](mailto:david@grief.co.uk)

**Ernie Pollard - Planning**

Springhill Farm, Standen Street, Iden Green, TN17 4LA  
Tel: 240674, Email: [erniepoll@beeb.net](mailto:erniepoll@beeb.net)

**Roger Lake**

Benenden Barn, The Street, Benenden, TN17 4BZ  
Tel: 241605

**Peter Blockley**

Clevelands, The Street, Benenden, TN17 4DB  
Tel: 240895, Email: [peterjblockley@aol.com](mailto:peterjblockley@aol.com)

**William Davies - Publicity**

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

--	--

### The Benenden Home Guard, 1940:

Below is the third in a series of Home Guard articles, taken from a record of the talks given by Collingwood Ingram (of The Grange, now Collingwood Grange), who was the local commander of the Home Guard. The first meeting was on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1940 and these are the fourth and fifth talks. The L.D.V. are the Local Defence Volunteers, the name used for the Home Guard early in the war. These are not the full records and where sections have been omitted, this is indicated by .....

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

#### 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1940

.....

As you all know, it is proposed to man the first floor room of St George's Club in case of need. This overlooks the Road Blocks at the Cross Roads. Now as the walls of this building are not 1\_ bricks thick (viz. 13 \_ inches) it cannot be regarded as bullet proof. I think the best & simplest method of making it so – since we have no sand available – would be to fill a number of ..?.. or sacks & place these in such a way that they form a kind of barricade. Men detailed for the second watch at the Telephone Exchange should do this work – by devoting, say \_ an hour – before going to bed. Mr Rollings is very kindly offering the requisite material & will say where this can be obtained.

.....

The following instructions have been received from H.Q. All landowners & farmers on whose property there are fields upon which an aeroplane can land should at once take steps to improvise some kind of obstruction to make their ground impossible for landing. Suggested obstructions – wire – stout posts – trenches – carts – ploughs and stacks placed in the middle of the fields. Mr Bligh has kindly undertaken the duty of passing this information on to all concerned.

.....

#### 25<sup>th</sup> June 1940

##### Comments on Practice Operations

Perhaps the most important information to emerge from these operations was the ease with which “5<sup>th</sup> Columnist[s]” were able to function without hindrance. A Sergeant in uniform was able to obtain from conversation in a pub in Hawkhurst, the names and numbers of the local Platoon Commanders – the sites, and hours during which they were manned, of L.D.V. piquet in the neighbourhood, while other information of a military nature was also obtained. This lesson, perhaps applies to the general public rather than to the personnel of the L.D.V. but is nevertheless one to be marked, learned and inwardly digested”

Another point to be noted was the relative immunity from suspicion that was derived from the use of a military uniform. No fewer than 9 cars were stolen in Hawkhurst alone: an officer actually climbed the main telegraph post in the centre of Hawkhurst, in full view of a crowd and no one questioned his right to do so.

Now as to Benenden. Troops from the A.A.Battery (supposed enemies) fraternised with a piquet of the L.D.V. until suspicion was allayed when he turned upon them and “killed” the lot. This, of course was a somewhat unrealistic test. It cannot be expected that four men of enemy origin could all speak such perfect English that they could deceive a body of Englishmen. I think this question of accent is going to be our surest safeguard from being imposed upon. In all cases of doubt persons, whether Officer, Ranker or civilian, should be made to sign in front of his interrogator. The signature so obtained must then be compared with that on his or her identity card.

.....

(added later)

There appears to have been some confusion as to the first part of our practice "battle". One thing is certain – the first trick went to the "enemy". But this was not the fault of the L.D.V.s. Having held up the enemy truck for examination at the Pullington Post the falsified papers were handed to Chief Inspector Kirby for verification & he must bear the blame for having passed them. This guard was thereupon "wiped out". It is equally certain that the next trick went to the enemy, for they hood-winked & "killed" our guard at the Telephone Exchange. Whether the Reserve Party incarcerated in the St Georges Club inflicted casualties on the enemy - & if so, how many – cannot be decided but I think it is fair to assume that they "did in" at least one or two of them. At any rate the enemy's claim to have captured the Garage cannot be admitted. On the return of one of our Reconnaissance Patrols, the St Georges garrison was reinforced, & this combined party unquestionably captured the remaining portion of the truck-load of enemy – they also capture two others. At the end of the operation only two remained at liberty – two men in a stolen car. To sum up,; we largely, but not entirely, wiped out our opponents – but not until they had demolished the Exchange and killed some 7 or 8 of our men. On the whole, I don't think we did too badly. The Officer commanding the Operation described the exercise as very encouraging & full of the spirit of attack, which brought a large measure of success.