



The Pilsdon at Malling Community

Summer 2012

Where streams of living water flow ... Thomas, left, a volunteer from France, and Paul spent many hours this summer cleaning up the Ewell Stream and rejuvenating the surroundings

Forthcoming events

September

Saturday 8	10.00am	Heritage Weekend open day Refreshments served 10am - 4pm Friends of Kent Churches Bike & Stride
	7.30pm	Joanne Louise Parker , singer/songwriter, in concert Book on 01732 870279 or online at wegottickets.com
Sunday 9	10.00am	Heritage Weekend open day Refreshments served 10am - 4pm
Saturday 15	6.30pm	The Rev Pam Rink to be priested by Bishop James, Barn Chapel, Pilsdon at Malling

November

Friday 2	10.00am	Bazaar in the Barn Chapel Daily until Sunday 11 (closed Monday November 5)
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Clothing appeal

Do you have any clothes that are in good condition that you no longer need? The Pilsdon at Malling Community urgently needs "good as new" cast-offs that are unwanted. We would appreciate any sportswear, casual tops, jackets, trousers and trainers, which would all go to support the needs of our community's guests, and wayfarers who pass through our community. Your support is greatly appreciated.

HOME

On my own
No place to call home
Thoughts of those left behind
Still loved, never forgotten
Tears of sadness, never belonging
Incredible feeling of always longing
Your life history starts from birth
This determines your place on earth
I hope one day I find home
A position on this planet never to be alone.

Thank you to the Pilsdon at Malling Community.
By Michael M – a street homeless man who stayed here in August

The Pilsdon at Malling Community

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In an attempt to save money—and the environment—we try to send newsletters by email to as many readers as possible. If you have email and do not already receive a digital copy of the newsletter, please drop a line to pilsdon@pilsdonatmalling.org.uk

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From the Guardian

The summer, when it finally arrived, has been good. The gardens have been beautiful and we have been enjoying the vegetables for some time now. It is such a privilege to be able to grow and eat our own produce. The flavour is amazing. We have had a surplus of some vegetables and each day there is something for the stall at the gate. So if you are passing do have a look – everything is picked daily so it is all very fresh. Our grapes are just ripening and are wonderfully sweet. Some grapes are also for sale on the stall. Thanks to Tony, Livia, Was and others who have worked tirelessly in the gardens and greenhouses.

There has also been a lot of activity in redecorating some of the rooms and corridors. We had to wait some time before the weather was good enough to move outside to eat, but eventually it stopped raining and warmed up. Finally the decoration in the dining room can be renewed and with all the other decorating that has taken place this year everywhere is beginning to look fresher and brighter. Thanks to Paul, Darren and their helpers. Paul also transformed the stream and built up the banks again with help from Thomas, a French student, who spent some weeks of his summer holidays here with us.

Everyone has worked hard to maintain the property and keep it looking so lovely over these past few months, despite the depressing weather of the early summer. Our lives here are relatively simple but that simplicity belies the hard work that goes into living in community and keeping a smallholding productive.

In the Sunday Gospel readings set for these weeks of Trinity we have heard how Jesus said he was the Bread of Life. Here at Pilsdon at Malling we make our own bread just about every day. Visitors who join us for lunch often comment on how good it is. It is real

bread, simple and delicious, made with a bit of love and given time to rise properly. There is no better smell than that of freshly baked bread.

Christ uses this symbol of bread to point us towards the deepest hunger of our lives, a hunger that can never be answered by greed, or accumulation, eating too much or fasting; it is a hunger answered only by God's love. We are offered by Christ a living bread, a bread of eternity. Unfortunately, because we are fallible human beings we insist on eating the things that don't give us life – things that



oppress our natural zest for life, things that stunt and restrict it – much of the 'bread' that the world serves is not life-giving. But we are to live as the beloved children of God. This means that there can be no evil talk, only talk that builds us up; it means putting away bitterness, wrath and anger, wrangling, slander and malice – often more easily said than done, especially when it's constantly served up to us by the media.

In Christ we are offered life: vulnerable, precious and touched, real life: a fragile gift that needs God in the nurturing. Like that real bread, kneaded and given time to rise, we have to give Christ time and space to know the fullness of all that he offers. The bread of God's love can connect us to the eternal treasures of our lives.

PAM RINK



To all our friends – old and new,
 This letter is a heartfelt thanks from Mary and Peter Barnett, particularly to those who came to our retirement farewell in June and those who wrote to us. You were all very generous in what you said and the gifts you gave us. We will enjoy reading the books and very much appreciate your financial gifts, which totalled over £600, so ensuring at least one ticket to Sri Lanka next year!

We have been invited by Himalee, our long-term volunteer from Sri Lanka, to go and celebrate Mary's 65th birthday with her family in December 2013. We hope to take all five children and their families as well. We just pray and hope that Mary will be sufficiently recovered to travel to the tropics safely.

We particularly thank Sr Mary John, Brenda Hurd, Jonathan Herbert, Joyce Oxley via

Roberta Frost, Caroline Price and Pam Rink and all the Community for all they said and did on Saturday. The Eucharist and party afterwards were beautifully organised and the weather was kind to us. We thought Pilsdon at Malling Community was looking very well – gardens, animals and residents. We are confident that Pam and all involved at Pilsdon will lead the Community into a new phase of its life.

May God bless all your endeavours and above all maintain the ethos of Pilsdon with its radical welcome and hospitality to all.

You remain very much in our thoughts and prayers and we look forward to returning again for Pam's ordination to the Priesthood and First Mass in September. By the way, the broad beans were delicious!

With love and good wishes,
Peter & Mary



Peter and Mary say goodbye to Pilsdon friends



Coming and goings: what's happening in West Malling

It's all about the people

Over the past few months five of our guests have decided to move on from the community but, as always, there seems to be a waiting list of people ready to take their places.

Kerri Canepa, our residential volunteer from Alaska, left us on 17 April. She travelled back to the USA for a holiday and to apply for a new visa. Kerri managed to complete the process and return in time to attend the celebration for Peter and Mary's retirement and she is now at Hilfield Friary in Dorset, where she is a volunteer.

The Revd *Peter Doodes*, a long-standing part-time community member, retired at the end of June. He was a most valuable member of our team who travelled twice a week from his home near Hastings to spend time with the community. He used his extensive skills and knowledge to help with maintenance and repairs around the site. We will miss his expertise and his quiet, gentle approach.

Sidney Garner, our honorary community member, celebrated his 90th birthday here in April. Sidney has been quite frail over the past few months but has managed to visit us twice – for Easter and his birthday and again for Peter and Mary's retirement celebration.

Mike Gower became a residential volunteer towards the end of April, and from the end of August we will be joined for a year by another volunteer, *James Race*.

Our day volunteers continue to give us wonderful support and we are exceptionally

grateful to them. We especially appreciate the work of *Linda and George*, who travel from Essex once a week and are great at just getting on with whatever may need doing at the time. During the summer we also enjoyed the company of *Thomas Billet*, a young student from France who spent five weeks here as a volunteer. He wanted to spend time in this country to help him to improve his English.

We are still looking for new members to join the community but our biggest drawback for recruiting seems to be the lack of suitable accommodation. This shortage also restricts how many residential volunteers we can have at any time but we are going through a process to address this issue.

A problem with the pipes

As with so many old buildings, the plumbing at Pilsdon at Malling leaves much to be desired. The two 1960s-vintage boilers in the Cottages, which probably should have been condemned years ago, have been replaced by one newfangled gas boiler that is twice as efficient while using half the energy. The new boiler is "future-proof" so it should cope with our planned renovation of the building. Another problem in the Cottages was a drainage issue in one of the bathrooms which has caused a minor flood on a couple of occasions. It seems that a past plumber did not realise that water doesn't drain uphill. As a consequence we have had to replace the carpet tiles in the corridor; but fortunately we seem to have a large supply of these in the garage. Who says hoarding is a bad thing?

NEED A MARQUEE?

Ideal for fetes, markets, weddings, etc.

Size: 40ft x 20ft - 15ft high.

The Pilsdon at Malling Community hires out its marquee in return for a donation to the charity. We will deliver, erect and take down. Please contact the community (see Page 2 for details)



We are also in the process of decorating the small television room and the dining room while the weather is clement. Usually in the summer we move the dining tables into the cloisters and eat outside, but until recently the weather has been unreasonable and it is only now that we are able to dine al fresco.

As one of the final big tasks before leaving, Peter Doodes, with the help of one of our former guests, replaced the oak beams in the south wall of the Barn.

Coming up against a stone wall

In June we commissioned a topographical survey so that architects could draw up plans for new accommodation and for repairs to a cracked boundary wall and the double gates



near St Frances. Who would have believed what a saga this would be— after being asked for specifications of type of pointing and mortar mix (this is a like-for-like repair) we've now been told we now need listed-building consent because the wall abuts a listed building 50 metres away. All this for a cracked wall.

Animals and vegetables

Every now and then we come up with a bright idea, and early this year, while still in the throes of a hosepipe ban, we decided to have a serious attempt at harnessing rainfall from the large greenhouse roof. We bought two 1,000 litre tanks and connected them to the drainpipes. Well, what a result. We found that

in heavy rain we could fill one tank from just a third of the roof area in one night. Of course, as soon as the water tanks were installed it started raining heavily, and the hosepipe ban was lifted. Our next project was to solve the overflow problem and prevent the greenhouse from flooding.

The heavy rain has had a detrimental effect on many vegetables. Some, such as carrots and parsnips, have simply not germinated, others bolted early due to the high humidity, or are not ripening properly because of the lack of sun. The new potato patch seems to have survived the soggy conditions. In spite of the adverse conditions, we are pretty much self sufficient in vegetables and have been able to sell some surplus, as well as stock the freezer with fruit and vegetables. The flower gardens have been particularly attractive this year and have been kept in good order by guests, volunteers and Wasantha.

We have a good supply of pork in the freezer and there will be more bacon and ham by the autumn. We have six surviving lambs – one of a set of triplets died soon after birth – and they are thriving. The rain has meant that there is plenty of good grazing. Unfortunately we do not have any goslings this year; although several eggs were laid they failed to hatch.

Keeping up appearances

The glass in the large greenhouse has been replaced as necessary after storm damage earlier in the year. The five-yearly electrical inspection has been carried out. Just like the plumbing, much work needs to be done to bring things up to standard so that an electrical certificate can be provided.

A crime ripple – not quite a wave

One problem of living in a (semi) urban environment is crime, and we have become a victim. On two occasions someone broke into the honesty box bolted onto our produce stall at the gate. We moved the box into the entrance hall, and days later it disappeared altogether. Police are investigating (we hope).



Joanne Louise Parker

The *Moonside* Gigs

Saturday
8th September
Doors 7.30pm

THE BARN CHAPEL at PILSDON
27 Water Lane, West Malling, ME19 6HH

£8.50 in advance, £9.00 on the door

joannelouiseparker.com
wegottickets.com

For further information call 07775 781237

