

VINTAGE 'EXCELLENT' Tom Stevenson, author of both the Christies and Sotheby's Wine Encyclopaedias and widely regarded as among the world's leading authorities on Champagne and Sparkling Wine, has given our first vintage an outstanding review. Following sampling of Herbert Hall Brut 2009 for the forthcoming Christies World Encyclopaedia of Champagne and Sparkling Wine he commented: "this is going to be an excellent sparkling wine...I love the fruit and the structure, and the mousse – never to be forgotten - is exceptional".

FROST HITS 2011 CROP

Few sights are more dispiriting to a grower than the damage caused by a late frost. After months of labour a crop can be destroyed by the briefest of temperature drops. So it was with the smaller winery vineyard, where the entire 2011 crop has been destroyed at a stroke after a brief but sharp frost in the early hours of May 4. Thankfully, the sloping main vineyard escaped the worst of the damage; here the vines are looking strong and vigorous, their growth three to four weeks ahead of last year's - thanks to an unusually hot April.

HERBERT HALL 2009 TO FEATURE IN GQ MAGAZINE

The 2009 vintage is understood to be featuring in the July edition of GQ Magazine (published in June) the men's 'style-bible' and stable-mate of Vogue. Jonathan Ray, the former wine critic of the Telegraph, who first wrote about Herbert Hall in 2008, has written an article about English Wine including a review of Herbert Hall Traditional Method BRUT.

WORKING TOWARDS A SUMMER LAUNCH

The first Herbert Hall BRUT and BRUT Rose wines will be launched in July. This is earlier than originally planned but the wines have developed so well in bottle that they are beginning to drink beautifully. We disgorged Lot 1 (500 bottles) in April. The wines are medium bodied with intense fruit and soft mousse. Retail prices will be £24 (incl. vat) per bottle for the BRUT and £26. (Incl. vat) per bottle for the BRUT ROSE. There will be a 15% discount on this for Club Members plus a further 5% discount on cases. We plan to organise a launch tasting at the winery in July – allowing the wine 3 months of post-disgorgement aging in bottle before release. There has already been great interest in the wine and because supply of the 2009 is very limited it would be helpful if anyone who would like to provisionally order one or more bottles could let me know (nmh@herberthall.co.uk). There is no obligation to buy but it will help to estimate demand against availability.

NICHOLAS HALL



The Parish Pump

The Journal of the Marden Society

May 2011

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

This performance by Mick Lynn and Geoff Doel could have been titled 'How to dance and sing all year round', as they entertained us with their folk calendar accompanied by appropriate musical instruments and singing. We were invited to join in with some songs.

Plough Monday marked the return to work after the first Sunday in January. A plough would be carried around and if you didn't donate you might have your garden ploughed up! It became connected with the black-faced Molly dancers.



Valentine's Day represented the start of spring and in the eighteenth century children would go round singing. Probably this Valentine was the Roman Christian martyr. You were also 'allowed' to choose a valentine who was not your husband or wife. It could be the first person you clapped eyes on and Samuel Pepys wrote in his diary that his wife was afraid to come downstairs in case her first sight of another person was a workman.

A folk song "Dame Durden" commemorates this celebration.

*" 'Twas on the morn of Valentine when birds began to prate,
 Dame Durden and her maids and men they altogether mate.
 And Joe kissed Dolly and Jack kissed Kitty "*

Next comes Pancake Day heralded by the ringing of the Shrove Bell at mid-morning. Pancakes used fat, butter and eggs – all forbidden during Lent. Pancake races became popular – even held in Maidstone football stadium. There were also marble leagues, which cumulated with the finals on Good Friday – God's Friday. That is the day when fishermen refused to go to sea.



The Biddenden Dole is given out on Easter Monday. It originated with a bequest of land, with the income providing bread, cheese and tea for widows. The poor could have the flour and water hard biscuits with the twins imprinted on them. The veracity of the story of the Siamese twins has been questioned and also the date. It is also thought that they could have been just joined at the hip and walked about with their arms around each other for the sake of comfort.

Maypoles were rare in Kent. This dancing from Italy was introduced to England by John Ruskin, famous art critic, and became more widespread when added to the teacher training programme. May was regarded as the end of winter and a good time for planting. Flower garlands were made and children progressed singing a May

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NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 25 May 7.30 pm

The Old School Room. Memorial Hall

Anthea Bryant - Canterbury The Hidden City

The Parish Pump is distributed free to Members of The Marden Society every two months



For details of Membership please contact the Membership Secretary Aileen Hill on 01622 831418

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Carol. For this they missed school. Jack in the Green was chosen by the chimney sweeps. These ceremonies are still celebrated on Spring Bank Holiday in Hastings, Rochester and Whitstable.



Later in the year came the Horn Fairs, which were quite raucous, including cross-dressing and one of the musicians wearing a pair of horns. In the 1720s, the Horn Fair was described by Daniel Defoe: Charleton, a village famous, or rather infamous for the yearly collected rabble of mad-people, at Horn-Fair; the rudeness of which I cannot but think, is such as ought to be suppressed, and indeed in a civiliz'd well govern'd nation, it may well be said to be unsufferable. The mob indeed at that time take all kinds of liberties, and the women are especially impudent for that day; as if it was a day that justify'd the giving themselves a loose to all manner of indecency and immodesty, without any reproach, or without suffering the censure which such behaviour would deserve at another time. The Ebernoe horn fair in Sussex is unusual in that it takes place on the cricket field after a match when the highest scoring batsman is presented with the horns of a ram roasted at the scene.



At Harvest Time a corn maiden (dolly) was made from the last sheaf of corn. John Barleycorn is a tuneful song reminding us of this season.



In Midwinter out came the Hooden Horse, it was considered appropriate for a man to be disguised as an animal. He came with his hoodeners (one with a black face) and musicians. Two of these horses' heads are held by Maidstone Museum.

Finally you had the Mummers' plays, with the chief characters being St George, the Turkish Knight, the Doctor and a green Santa. Any watchers of Lark Rise to Candleford would recognise this.

EUNICE DOSWELL

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Our first extra meeting in April, Ghosts – Fact or Fiction – was an interesting evening although whether anyone changed their views afterwards is unclear.

Anthea Bryant will be talking about Canterbury – the Hidden City including Saints, Pilgrims and the Mayflower. This will be on Wednesday 25 May at 8.00pm in the Old School Room of the Memorial Hall. Everyone is welcome and we particularly invite new members.

In June we are having an evening stroll around the cheese-making farm at Staplehurst. The date for this is **15 June**, meeting in the car park at 6.30 pm to share cars. The tour will last approximately one hour, and there will be an opportunity to taste and buy the locally made cheese. Now the date is settled it will appear on notices and the KM. Please let me know if you will be going – Tel. 01622 831529

Anyone who wants to is invited to get together back in Marden for a meal somewhere afterwards.

MAUREEN CLAYTON

MARDEN DENTAL SURGERY TRANSFORMED

April 2011 saw the official opening of Dr Kaumudi Dhutia's new dental surgery in Church Green. Because of my connections with the place, I was asked to say a few words at the opening ceremony. For those of you with an interest in Marden history, an edited version is given below.

My family have lived in and around Marden for several hundred years and for some time owned the garage and workshops next door, so I feel an affinity and not inconsiderable interest in how the surgery building has developed over the years. For a number of years it was a butcher's shop owned by the Cranham family. They raised the livestock for the shop in the fields over the back, from which Cranham square takes its name. Harry Cranham's son Jack was my father's best man. I expect many of you will remember the dark brown glazed tiles, typical of a butcher's shop in those days that remained on the front walls until just a few years ago.

Later, in my youth, it had become a coal and corn merchant's office, owned by Miskin and Sons and managed by Tom Haffenden who lived in part of the house that is now Kaumudi's home. John Verrall, now one of our Borough Councillors, worked alongside him as a young man. Miskin's lorry lived in the shed behind. John Duke of Scats fame and Ken Hollamby used to deliver with this, whilst Frank Sharp used to run the grain store that is now Hugo's workshop. Later still, Sally ran her hairdressing business here.



So there is quite a bit of Marden history tied up with this place. But even as a dental surgery it is now firmly placed in Marden history. Kaumudi has been practicing here for 24 years now, something I personally find very difficult to believe. I remember her and Kevin first moving to Marden, living in Chantry Road. We rapidly became friends through their involvement in the community, particularly the Marden Society and the Footpath Group. Many a pint was sunk after a strenuous session humping footbridges across fields, purely for re-hydration purposes, and on a more sobering occasion, pulling their daughter Mona out of a deep ditch behind Gravel Pit when she was trying to help daddy a bit too keenly. But I digress.

I have been a patient here since she first opened. I have experienced the changes and improvements that have taken place in the equipment, in techniques and in the ambience and facilities.

Yes, there have been problems and delays in completing this development, circumstances outside the practice's control but now this day has arrived, Kaumudi and all her team can be justifiably proud.

It is fantastic that a village the size of Marden has such a facility, so congratulations to Kaumudi and every possible success for the future.

And, yes, I've still got all my own teeth!



GRAHAM TIPPEN