

Your Mag

Steyning | Bramber | Upper Beeding

July 2025



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Welcome to our July issue!

Summer is well and truly here, and with it comes a wonderful burst of activity across Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding. Whether you're enjoying a sunny stroll along our High Street, exploring nature on one of the many Downland walks, or getting involved in one of the fantastic community events, there's so much to make this time of year special.

This month we've got plenty to share:

- The long-awaited news on the White Bridge replacement is finally here - work is underway, promising a much-improved link between Steyning and Upper Beeding.
- The Steyning Downland Scheme invites families to enjoy nature up close, from butterfly walks to teddy bear picnics - a perfect way to spend a summer's day.
- Bramber Castle will be stepping back in time for its exciting 'Bramber Castle Comes Alive' event later this month, which promises fun for all ages.
- We also meet Pepper, our adorable Pet of the Month, and catch up with Aidan Timmons, Headteacher at Steyning Grammar School, who shares his passion for education and the community.

As always, I'd like to say a huge thank you to all our contributors, advertisers and readers who continue to make Your Mag. And don't forget to support our fantastic local businesses - many of whom are offering exclusive summer offers inside this issue.

Enjoy the sunshine and see you next month!

Warm wishes,
Melanie

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We're Going on a Bear Hunt! And other interesting things...

Over the last month we are seeing lots of wonderful things as the volunteer conservation team carry out essential maintenance and restoration work across the Downland, both of which keep the landscape looking its natural best.

The team repaired a leaky cattle trough and you may have noticed the blown over tree branches on Nightingale Lane, toppled by gusty wind, but now restored. Getting close to nature allows us to notice Hairy shieldbugs on the Upper Horseshoe and a Hairy Dragonfly in the Secret Garden, plus a Large red damselfly on the Gateway pond. We also had some unexpected lodgers in the pond - several young perch - which we re-homed somewhere more suitable. Perch are voracious predators, and grow big, so a small wildlife pond is not suitable for them. Generally fish and wildlife ponds are not a good combination.

If you want to get closer to nature in July join us for or a Butterfly Walk with author Michael Blencowe to discover Skippers, Admirals, Hairstreaks and Fritillaries, or take a walk in the Downs with Poet Simon Zec as he leads Youth Poetry for young writers. And for families, we're going on a bear hunt! The Teddy Bear's Picnic for 4-7 yr old's is an afternoon of craft activities with a short walk - bring a picnic!

Every ticket helps The Steyning Downland Scheme to restore and nurture this habitat for people and nature. It's easy to book, and these tickets are under a tenner.

Butterfly Walk with Michael Blencowe: July 24th
14:00-16:00 £8 (under 18's: £4)
Youth Poetry on the Downs:
July 25th 11:00-13:00 £6
Teddy Bear's Picnic - Family Event:
30th July 10:00 - 13:00 £6.50

PS: Date for your diary - The Big Picnic returns on 13th September - full details to follow, keep your eyes peeled!

To book and for full details visit:
www.steyningdownland.org
Find us on Facebook and Instagram:
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Hairy dragon fly by Paul Day



Hairsheildbug by Paul Day



Matthew J Thomas



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At last! Some good news to report on the White Bridge Link

It has been nearly two years since the White Bridge was closed, when serious structural problems were discovered with the metalwork supporting this much-used 120 year-old footbridge over the River Adur. This was a blow for local residents and a big setback for the White Bridge Link project, which was gearing up to improve the whole footpath connecting Steyning and Upper Beeding using the bridge as the vital crossing point over the river.

But there's finally some good news to report. After much discussion and planning, work has started to demolish the current bridge and replace it with a brand new structure.



Closure of the current bridge has been a big inconvenience and disappointment for current users.

But the end result should worth waiting for. Rather than a muddy path, at last we'll have an attractive and easily negotiable walking route across the river passable in almost all weather conditions.

To find out the latest on the White Bridge Link project see:
www.visitsteyning.co.uk/whitebridgelinek/



It'll be a major project and will begin with Southern Gas Networks diverting the gas pipe that is currently supported by the bridge, and running it underneath the river. As well as replacing the footbridge, work will be carried out to complete the outstanding footpath re-surfacing work on the Beeding side of the river, to create a sound, weatherproof pathway surface all the way between Steyning and Upper Beeding. All going well, the work should be completed by October this year.

Construction works for the replacement bridge will cost an estimated £700,000, and will come from the West Sussex County Council capital delivery budget. Additional funding for the footpath re-surfacing work is being provided by the Wilson Memorial Trust

Front Cover: Lucy Wakefield

I began sewing as a child, soft toys and then dressmaking including wedding dresses for friends and family. Using my sewing machine to embroider was an exciting progression as I enjoy experimenting.

The three-dimension element of upholstery, which I like, may also relate back to my dressmaking background. My current focus is using my original designs, which incorporate

hand stitching and hand dyed fabrics, to upholster furniture.

My current focus is using my original sketches to design the hand stitching onto my hand dyed fabrics. This enables me to 'wrap' the imagery around the furniture when I upholster.

Contact details: Lucy Wakefield
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Of Owls, Larks and Hedgehogs

I've always been a night owl. I'm writing this as my creativity kicks in; unhelpfully that's usually around 21:00. I spent my childhood howling in resistance at those who dared tell me it was bedtime. I would read until 03:00 and be virtually dragged from my bed for school in the morning.

Despite what my mother says, it's a real thing. We are genetically predisposed to different chronotypes associated with our circadian rhythm. There are owls (those who wake and sleep later), larks (those who wake and sleep earlier) and ambivalent (those who are more adaptable to sleep pattern changes).

I used to long to wake up earlier and make the best of the day. Especially as a keen birder it would be advantageous. If I ever do it's glorious. The air is different in the early morning. There's so much light, so much time. But there are perks to the night too. It's quiet; everyone else is asleep. It's peaceful and less distracting. And the best bit, of course, is watching nocturnal animals.

I live with another owl. Together, we slink about the local nature reserve at dusk. Hushed tones to fit in. Eyes adjusting to the perceived blackness. There is rarely anyone else around. The damp smell of the reedbeds seems stronger than in the day. The gravel and parched grass crunch louder underfoot. The world feels bigger somehow, yet more tranquil.

We detect dancing bats who whizz past our faces, saving us from nibbling evening

midges. We walk directly past Rabbits on meadow buffets, who barely look up to note us. We take in pre-roosting bird calls; Reed Warbler, Song Thrush, Blackbird, Robin, and skyward silhouettes of those returning for the night; gulls, corvids, a Peregrine. A Fox on patrol stops to watch us with an air of disdain; *'It's my turn now'*.

Once we're out of the reserve we stop at the usual spot, at the usual time, and wait. Then we see it. Squat legs, busy snout and about 5,000 spines scuttle across the car park and along the kerbside dandelions. The Hedgehog crosses the road; it's not busy but it's still a risky game, and I once flagged down a startled mini-bus driver to allow for safe hog passage. The Hedgehog continues along a footpath, and through a fence hole cut by kind urban wildlife heroes.

These sightings feel like treats to which few of us are party. I've not only accepted my nighttime owl form; I completely embrace it. Just don't ask me to make plans before midday.

By Kerry Williams
Communications Officer – Conservation,
Sussex Wildlife Trust



Pipistrelle bat © Hugh Clark FRPS



Fox at night © Daryl Peters

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LOCAL BUSINESS FOCUS


Can a Corgi?!?

Soapbox racing and a new practice building:
 Over the past couple of months, I have found myself spending more time on matters of design and realization than actually being a vet. As you may know from my previous musings, as well as labradors, we have the dubious privilege of owning a Corgi called Jorgé. While Jorgé may be large on character and determination, he is short on stature and more specifically leg length. Indeed, in terms of design, it is hard to see where he exceeds the labradors except in the rather niche situation where he can sneak under something that they cannot!

Birth of the Corgi Kart:
 My younger son, Owen (11), and I were joking about this whilst watching the 'Red Bull Soapbox Race' last year and we both agreed that the Corgi would be much improved if it had wheels instead of legs – and this is when the idea of the 'Corgi Kart' was born. Over the following weeks it progressed from an idea to us entering the Great Dunmow Soapbox race in Essex, which took place in May. 6 weeks before the race date, we began manufacture and with the indispensable help of some friends (most notably Danny and Howard for metalwork and welding!) we just managed to complete the Corgi Kart in time and team 'Jorgé's Racers' were all set. We were soon to discover that the event was rather larger than expected – with 10,000 supporters attending to watch the 55 competitors tackle the hill!



New registration offer:
 If you would like to register, you can do so by scanning the QR code below and using promo code 'HASSOCKS' – anyone who registers before 8th July will receive a 10% discount off their first consultation. Additionally, to celebrate our opening, for the first four weeks, every client who books and attends an appointment at Hassocks will be entered into our weekly prize draw. Each week, one lucky pet will win a year's free subscription to our health plan, a prize worth over £250.



And the race?
 I suppose you may be wondering what the outcome of the race was... After a prolonged interview at the top while the previous racer was cleared from the track, the Corgi Kart and I were launched down the ramp to the music of 'Who let the dog's out?' pursued by some 11 year old's dressed as German Shepherd dogs. We were going great guns – successfully navigating the first jump with foam car wash, then the chicane and finally the 'big kicker'. All seemed fine until the landing, where the Corgi sadly suffered from bilateral front leg fractures, which resulted in a left paw getting stuck under our chassis. The speed slowly bled off and I stopped one metre from the finish and had to push myself over the line! It seems even decorative legs are the undoing of the Corgi, but luckily, I am interested in orthopaedics, so I should be able to repair the fractures with some masking tape and no more nails – slightly less involved than the real thing! Some improvements to be made, but we'll be back next year!



Designing the new office building:
 The second project (which was obviously far less important than the soapbox race!) was the design and layout of our new practice in Hassocks. Whilst the building had been previously used as a veterinary practice, there were a lot of improvements that needed to be made. Over the past two months these renovations have been carried out and with a few weeks left until completion, we are very pleased with the result. The practice will have dog and cat waiting areas and most importantly a coffee machine for clients! We also have separate dog and cat kenneling, with each kennel equipped with individual LED lighting and underfloor heating - Amazon Echo's will mean suitable playlists are available for our canine and feline patients! The practice is equipped with a full in house laboratory for blood, cytological, urine and faecal testing, an operating theatre, a digital X-ray machine, a full dental suite (including dental X-ray), as well as facilities for cardiac and abdominal ultrasound. Add in air-conditioning, new doors, alarm systems, phones and IT and it's been quite a busy time! However, we're on track for our opening date of the 8th of July and look forward to welcoming the clients of Hassocks and their pets from this day onwards.



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July 2025: Diary Events

The following nonrecurring events are also in the What's On section on the Your Steyning, Bramber & Beeding website at: www.yourmag.co.uk

Tuesday 1st July

Kadenza

12:30 – 13:00

Church of St Andrew & St Cuthman

Kadenza Lunchtime Concert

Please join us for this concert by Kadenza, one in a series of lunchtime concerts at the Church of St Andrew & St Cuthman. Entry is free with a retiring collection in aid of repairs and improvements to the church.

Friday 4th July

Vintage Years Club

14:00 – 16:00

Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Summer Party

Doors open from 13:45. There will be a Raffle Table. We are pleased to welcome the Steyning Strummers and Singers to entertain us during our Summer Party. Refreshments will be served from 15:15 and we will celebrate July birthdays. Entrance fee is £3 (£5 visitors). Annual membership fee is £10 (each April). Always contact Bev Francis-Hills 01273 493894 or 07801 442891 before attending for the first time/ returning after a long break, for transport needs or any other information. Contact Ann Long 07801108855 E: annplong@icloud.com

Tuesday 8th July

Sing Out Sister

12:30 – 13:00

Church of St Andrew & St Cuthman

Lunchtime Concert

Please join us for this concert by Sing Out Sister, one in a series of lunchtime concerts at the Church of St Andrew & St Cuthman. Entry is free with a retiring collection in aid of repairs and improvements to the church.

Tuesday 8th July

Board Game Cafe

15:15 – 17:15

Penfold Hall, Church Street, Steyning

Board Games

The Neighbourhood Wardens have teamed up with Steyning Parish Church to run the Board game cafe. We have lots of games that we can teach you or if you have a favourite one bring it along! We have games for all ages. Or just come along for free hot drinks, biscuits and Christmas treats! This free event runs on the second Tuesday of every month (including school holidays where applicable). The Children's and Families Worker and Neighbourhood Wardens will be there so if you have any questions, or if you want to find out more about their roles they will be available to speak to. All ages are welcome. Contact the Neighbourhood Wardens for more details: Mike - 07734 387888 / Alison - 07734 387889 SBUB.wardens@horsham.gov.uk

Monday 14th July

The Arts Society Steyning

10:00 – 12:00

Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

July Lecture

A talk by Nicholas Henderson: How to 'Read' the English Country Church. The architectural, historical, religious and social changes that have shaped and formed our church buildings. The second lecture in this series begins with the epoch-changing Tudors and the creation of a new Protestantism, passing through the destructive changes of the 17th century followed by restoration and liturgical change. The largely forgotten Georgian period of church architecture is examined and the great period of church building as is gothic revival of the Victorians. Finally, we consider contemporary influences on church buildings and how our country churches reflect the passing of history. A graduate of Selwyn College, Cambridge, Nicholas trained for the Anglican ministry at Ripon Hall, Oxford. Nicholas has a particular interest in the period of the English Reformation and the associated cultural, architectural and social changes it has produced. He lectures regularly and assists as a priest in London. Free to members, £10 donation for visitors. E: steyning@theartsociety.org W:www.theartsocietysteyning.org.uk

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Nigel Phillips

19:30 – 21:30

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Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Talk On Water

Ponds and water features for the garden, both large and small. Come along and meet Nigel Phillips, a well-known garden designer from Lewes. Nigel will be sharing tips and ideas on how to improve our gardens by adding sound, reflection and movement, through the addition of a water feature. Contact: Alison Hamer 01903 816588 E: steyninggardeningclub@gmail.com

Tuesday 15th July
Steyning Singers & Strummers
2:30 – 13:00

Church of St Andrew & St Cuthman

Singers & Strummers Lunchtime Concert

Please join us for this concert by Steyning Singers & Strummers, one in a series of lunchtime concerts at the Church of St Andrew & St Cuthman. Entry is free with a retiring collection in aid of repairs and improvements to the church.

Wednesday 16th July
The Steyning Society's
18:00 – 20:00

Saffrons, Holland Road, Steyning, BN44 3GJ

Fundraiser AI Fresco Garden Party

Join us for a truly special evening in the heart of Steyning! We invite you to an AI Fresco Garden Party, a relaxed summer celebration with live music, delightful refreshments and a chance to support some brilliant local causes. It is being held at Saffrons, Holland road, Steyning by kind permission of Tim Melton and Bernadean Carey. The Riverside Shuffle will provide the music. Tickets cost £20 which includes a glass of Smock Alley sparkling wine, other wine, beer, soft drinks plus a generous selection of canapés. Tickets are available from The Steyning Bookshop, at our monthly meeting or online and letting the Treasurer know (adriangobat@hotmail.co.uk) - bank details on our website. They are also available via Ticket Source.

Friday 18th July
Dr Andrew Crowson
20:30 – 21:30

Old Mill Pond, Rifle Range, Steyning, West Sussex.

Mad Nothing

Join us for our 2025 mothy extravaganza with moth expert Andrew Crowson from A Rocha UK. Sign up for one or both options below.

Option 1: Meet us for a Friday evening outdoor slide show and presentation. The evening will include a live demonstration of a moth trap. We may even see some moths as the evening light closes in!

Option 2: Come back the next morning for a light breakfast while we open up the traps and find out what we caught during the night. Price: £6 and £7 separately for each event. Contact: Matthew Thomas 01903 817 996 E: office@steyningdownland.org

Sunday 20th July
Steyning & District Community Partnership
11:00 to 16:00
Bramber Castle

Yesteryear in Action!

Step back in time and experience days gone by, as Bramber Castle Comes Alive! Full itinerary not yet completely finalised at time of print, but there will be on-going activities throughout the event to include re-enactments, falconry, archery, Mythago mythical primal dancing/music etc., plus food and drink stalls to keep you 'fuelled' for the event. If at all possible - If you live locally - it would be really great if you could walk / cycle to the Castle to leave parking spaces for those who come from further afield. This is going to be a fantastic, exciting and very special day - do not miss it! For Info
E: <https://visitsteyning.co.uk/contact-us/>

Wednesday 23rd July
Steyning and District Flower Club
19:30 – 21:30
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

'Once Upon a Time'

This month we are delighted to welcome Michelle King who will be providing an evening of inspirational floral demonstrations with a story theme. There will be an opportunity to win one of her wonderful creations in the evening raffle. Refreshments will be available. Visitors are always warmly welcomed to our friendly Club. Doors open at 19.00. Members free and non-members £7.00 on the door. Contact: Valerie Hodges 07870 982699 - E: val.hodges@yahoo.co.uk

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Thursday 24th July

Michael Blencowe

14:00 – 16:00

SDS Gateway Building, Behind Mouse Cottage, Mouse Lane, Steyning

Butterfly Walk

Join renowned butterfly expert Michael Blencowe and discover the lepidopteran delights of the Steyning Downland Scheme. On the menu are skippers, admirals, hairstreaks, fritillaries and perhaps even the elusive Adonis Blue. Price: £8 (under 18's - £4)

Friday 25th July

Simon Zec

11:00 – 13:00

SDS Gateway Building, Behind Mouse Cottage, Mouse Lane, Steyning

Youth Poetry on the Downs (12-16 year old's)

A poetry event specially for 12 - 16 year old's. Are you creative? Do you like writing? Do you like nature? Walk around the Steyning Downs and listen to your host, Simon Zec read some of his own and others poems with a link to the natural world. There will be an opportunity to write your own poetry too! Price: £6. Contact: Matthew Thomas 01903 817
E: 996office@steyningdownland.org

Wednesday 30th July

Steyning Downland Scheme

10:00 – 13:00

The Wild Play Area / Downland Orchard at the end of Nightingale Lane, near the Rifle Range, Steyning.

Teddy Bear's Picnic (4-7 year old's)

Join us for a family fun activity for 4 - 7 year old's. The afternoon will be based on the story 'We're going on a bear hunt' by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury and will include a short walk and craft activities. Bring a picnic! Price: £6.50. Contact Matthew Thomas 01903 817
E: 996office@steyningdownland.org

Thursday 7th August

Michael Blencowe

10:00 – 12:00

SDS Gateway Building, Behind Mouse Cottage, Mouse Lane, Steyning

Mindfulness Butterfly Walk

A special event run in partnership with West Sussex Mind. Join butterfly expert Michael Blencowe for a relaxing afternoon stroll around the Steyning Downland, enjoying the mental health benefits of the countryside in general and our amazing butterflies in particular. Price: £8, (under 18's and Mind Service Users* £4). Contact Matthew Thomas 01903 817
E: 996office@steyningdownland.org

Thursday 7th August

Youth Archery

11:00 – 12:30

Rifle Range, Steyning, West Sussex.

Youth Archery (7-17 year old's) on the Downs

We've teamed up with a qualified archery instructor to offer archery training sessions at the Steyning Rifle Range. Come along and try it out for the first time or brush up your skills!

NOTE: Also Thursday 7th August 13:00 – 14:30.

Price: See website for details. Contact Matthew Thomas 01903 817

E: 996office@steyningdownland.org

National Gardens for July:

- **Meadowside**, 7 Finches Lane, West Chiltington, Pulborough, West Sussex. RH20 2PX. Open - Thursday 3rd July 10:30 - 16:30.

- **Lynwood**, Holland Road, Steyning, West Sussex. BN44 3GJ. Open Friday 4th July 12:00 – 17:00.

- **Saffrons**, Holland Road, Steyning, West Sussex. BN44 3GJ. Open Garden. Open Friday 11th July 12:00 – 17:00.

- **Lynwood**, Holland Road, Steyning, West Sussex. BN44 3GJ. Open Friday 11th July 12:00 – 17:00.

- **Wiston House**, Steyning Road, Wiston, West Sussex. BN44 3DD. Open Saturday 12th July 10:30 – 17:30

- **Sullington** The Old Rectory, Old Rectory Lane, Pulborough, West Sussex. RH20 2AF. Open Tuesday 15th July 09:30 – 17:30.

Info: Kate Harrison kate.harrison@ngs.org.uk

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The Arts Society of Steyning.

Tuesday 17 June 2025 special evening lecture.

'Undressing Antiques': an illustrated lecture with Mark Hill

Mark Hill, a regular presenter on the BBC's Antiques Roadshow, comes to Steyning to deliver a special evening lecture for the Arts Society of Steyning.

Members and visitors are welcome.

This talk offers a fascinating introduction to buying antiques and suggests how you can integrate and enjoy them in today's homes.

The state of the antiques market and the different meanings of the word 'value' are explored, and Mark looks at what current and future generations of collectors are buying, why they are choosing those items and how they are displayed.

The talk is the third in an annual series remembering the society's founder, Millicent Honeywood.

Doors open at 19:00 for drinks.

Talk starts at 19:45 for an hour + Q&As, finishing around 21:00

Venue: The Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning, BN44 3XZ

Tickets cost £12.50 to include a glass of wine or a soft drink. Entrance free for those in full time education.

Available via:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/thesteyningartssociety>

or via The Steyning Bookshop (cash only).

Tickets can also be bought on the night at the door (subject to availability), or from the usual monthly lecture on Monday 9th June 2025 at 10:00 at The Steyning Centre.



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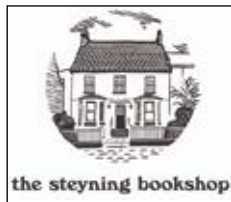
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July's Pet of the Month is Pepper

Tell us a little about Pepper. What breed are they, and how did they become part of your family?

Pepper is a gorgeous 6yr old Cocker Spaniel. She's a Show Cocker, (not the overly busy kind) more the 'I will ignore your request unless it's in my interest' kind. A local girl, bred by a trusted friend, she arrived on my son's birthday, a perfect tiny bundle of fur.



member of the family to donate from their breakfast. Then a long walk with her best friend Biggles. Along the way she would gobble up special treats in the form of rabbit poo and discarded banana skins with a splash of perfume; 'scent of Fox poo'. After that, home for a long nap on whomever's bed she can gain access to. Finally, Dinner and a cuddle on the sofa. To make it an extra special day Pepper would successfully raid the dishwasher and bin at least twice, steal carrots from the fridge and persuade a gullible member of the household, that she definitely hasn't had dinner yet!

Has Pepper ever done something heroic, mischievous, or surprising? Tell us the story!

One Christmas Pepper managed to Consume a guest dog's five-day supply of food within a matter of minutes. She sheepishly emerged from the bedroom and wobbled up the corridor, her belly dragging behind her, then ensued an evening of many urgent trips to the garden!

What's the one thing you'd love everyone to know about life with Pepper?

Pepper is a wonderfully affectionate and energetic dog. She loves to rollover for a good tummy rub or snuggle up close to you on the sofa. However long you have been away from her... even if just upstairs for 10 minutes she always welcomes you as though you have been away for years! She is just perfect!

Every month we feature a local pet, if you would like your pet to be featured as Pet of the Month. E: melanie@barawood.co.uk

Pepper's funniest or quirkiest habit that always makes you smile?

Pepper is a professional singer/howler. She can perform on demand if requested! She can even start a duet with her big brother Biggles. 3am performances are not always appreciated by the neighbours though.

If Pepper could have a perfect day, what would it include?

Pepper's perfect day would begin and end with food in whatever form came within her grasp! An early meal is always a bonus, followed by whatever she can persuade a

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Q&A with Aidan Timmons, Headteacher at Steyning Grammar School

Let's start with you - what first inspired you to go into teaching, and what's kept you in it?

After leaving University, whilst working full time I was asked if I could go into a school and do some sculpture workshops to A Level Students. I absolutely loved seeing the students making progress under my guidance and this led me to consider a path in teaching. It's amazing to look back and see how that was a pivotal experience in my life, especially as I never thought I could be a teacher! To do this day I still love seeing the students succeed and finding purpose and that is the point of school. Education is just so important and we are so privileged to do this job.

You've now been at the helm of Steyning Grammar for a while - what's something about the school that genuinely surprised or impressed you?

Steyning has such a long history of character education and our vision of "flourish" is at the heart of what we do. It is so special to work in a state school with a 411 year History and we often speak to the students about those who have gone before us and the things that bind us as a community rather than divide us.

What does a typical day look like for you (if such a thing exists)? Any daily rituals or must-dos?

One of the great things about teaching is how everyday is different - that certainly wasn't the case when I went into full-time work after University! For me, a must do is to make sure I am amongst the students everyday, especially at break and lunch to see and feel how the school is. I am very fortunate to work with great colleagues who afford me the time to be able to do this.

How do you unwind outside of work? Any hobbies or guilty pleasures we should know about?

I love music and do still tinkle about on the Guitar, I love sport but have pretty much hung up my football boots, so going for long walks with my wife, children and our dog Paddy keeps me active and hopefully healthy!



Steyning Grammar has such deep roots in the community. What do you think makes it stand out as a school today?

As I mentioned earlier, those deep roots and that History are still the key to this great school. In such a fast paced world with so much noise, Steyning's Ethos is ancient and timeless. At the heart, schools are communities and human existence is built on communities with shared values which provide the opportunity for everyone to flourish.

What's been one of your proudest moments at SGS so far - something that really stayed with you?

That's a tricky one as every week I have the privilege of celebrating the many successes of our students, in particular beyond the classroom. From the yearly Art exhibitions, to the sporting successes, the students of Steyning continue to blow me away, but one thing that stands out is our yearly 'Jailbreak' where our students raise money for the NSPCC. The students dress up in crazy outfits to attract attention from the public and get them to donate, raising thousands of pounds. In our busy lives, it is often very hard to find the time to give back but seeing young people lead the way in doing so fills me with so much pride and hope.

Another special moment was when the Church of England recognised the excellent provision we give our children in the SIAMS inspection last year.

If you could give one piece of advice to every student walking through your doors, what would it be?

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We love sharing the stories of inspiring individuals in our community.

If you know someone who deserves to be featured in a future Q&A - whether they run a local business, contribute through volunteering, or have an interesting story to tell - do get in touch. E: melanie@barawood.co.uk - we'd love to hear from you!



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July 2025: Steyning for Trees

We are so pleased to see so many people who understand the importance of planting trees and hedges on their land, to reverse climate change. Over 20 now, have come to us for help and advice for their pieces of land.

These are forming a mosaic of nature- rich areas in and around Steyning forming connecting areas for wildlife. We have been able to find free hedging plants for them, some to be planted in the autumn. It is wonderful to have such a dedicated group of people, including the PC who feel we need to DO something NOW. Hedges/wildlife corridors help carbon capture and biodiversity so much. This now includes Steyning Grammar School Eco Council and their teachers.

We are helping them make a .dead hedge for their ERA week on the wonderful wild land we have found for them. See our website for the advantages and what they support. It is great to be helping the younger generation of Steyning in their wish to get involved in providing for the needs of our endangered species and carbon capture.

CPRE Tree Festival:

We felt so pleased when showing members and organizers of the Tree Festival the work we and others are doing here. We showed them the Birch tree we were awarded for the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee growing well. We walked through the Churchyard showing them the primroses and wild flowers growing there. On to Shooting Field with the SFT mini-copses thickening up to provide cover.

The trees we have planted on the WSCC verges. storing Carbon and removing pollution from our streets, improving the air we breathe. Feeding our birds, providing homes for invertebrates . CPRE plant trees on Brighton pavements, funded by the Lottery Scheme, supported by Brighton City Council The ever-increasing bluebells (early pollinators) paid for and planted by us with the help of the Life on the Verge Group on Shooting Field.. Down to Abbey Road, our newly laid hedge and the work the PC are doing there. We felt so proud to show them around our lovely town. Penny Hudd , Chair of the Tree Festival said *'The good work you are doing is terrific.'*

Many thanks to Colin Staff, our volunteer who lives at Abbey Road, for his dedicated work on the SFT hedge there. SFT and Sussex Ornithological



Society have paid for the hedge to be laid, it will provide excellent nesting, food and cover for birds etc, as it grows up.

Mapping Peatlands - Many now -dry and damaged So Trees remain one of our best defences against climate change. 80% of our peatlands are dry and damaged. When healthy it is the country's biggest carbon store, covering roughly 8.5% of the country's surface.

Kew Gardens: Of the Oak:

Art Installation beside the Luscombe Oak, celebrates the oak as a vital hub of biodiversity creating a digital double real-world. The data has been captured by Kew's scientists and horticulturists and shows the inner workings of the tree.

A message from Steve Palmier:

Thanks to SFT volunteer hedge planting Team for 60m of hedge saplings to reinforce my edge of wilding land. Over time the plants should provide a safer haven for wildlife. In particular the resident barn owl in the sleepy hollow oak tree. Additionally hedge and tree saplings I have planted round the Field of Totems will eventually provide a surrounding wilding wood for wildlife.

The totems were originally sleepers now repurposed once more as totems on a north-south axis also summer and winter solstices, making for a memorable experience.



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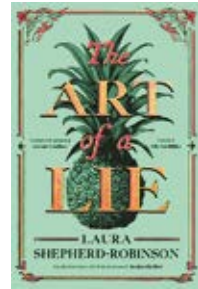
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July 2025 Book Reviews

Adult Books



The Art of a Lie by Laura Shepherd-Robinson

Macmillan, £18.99 hardback

After the brutal murder of her husband, Hannah Cole is desperately trying to keep her head above water. Her beloved confectionary shop, the Punchbowl and

Pineapple is barely staying afloat, and she has attracted the attention of pompous novelist and magistrate, Henry Fielding. So, when a handsome stranger appears in the shop, claiming to be a friend of Hannah's late husband, and to know how to access his savings, Hannah is naturally suspicious, but as she gets to know William better, and he shares his passion for iced cream, should she dare hope that he is a man of his word? As the gossip of Georgian London swells around them, and Henry Fielding gets ever closer, who is keeping more secrets from the other – Hannah or William?

Another deftly plotted and meticulously researched historical mystery from Laura Shepherd-Robinson.



The Night Lagoon by Jo Morey

Harper Collins, £16.99 hardback

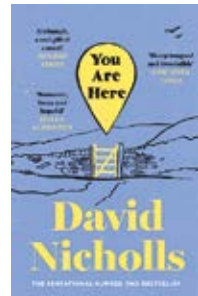
I was instantly hooked by this debut novel from Jo Morey, who lives in West Sussex and went to Steyning Grammar School – in fact the late, great SGS English teacher

Steven Pinkus gets a shout out in her acknowledgements! It's a sizzling, sultry story of desire, dark secrets and deception, set in the tropical jungle of Belize.

Laelia, her two children and her partner Aid have travelled to Belize to visit her father, an academic and world-renowned orchid

expert who has retired to a dilapidated lodge deep in the Belizean jungle. When her father suffers a devastating stroke, they move into his jungle lodge to await his recovery. For Laelia, who has hearing loss and tinnitus, this new life offers a welcome break from the stressful cacophony of her London cheffing career, but Aid withdraws, disappearing off to drink with dubious new business contacts. As the rum-fuelled passion of their relationship sours into something darker, Laelia makes some shocking discoveries: about her father, about Aid, and about herself.

A gripping novel which simmers with tension and tropical heat, the time lines are cleverly woven for a slow reveal and the lush fecundity of the jungle setting is vividly evoked, as is the dislocated feeling of living with a hearing impairment.



You are Here by David Nicholls

Hodder, £9.99 paperback

Likely to be THE paperback in every hiker's backpack this summer, this witty and astutely observed romcom is as English as tea and crumpets!

Marnie and Michael are both recently divorced

introverts who have receded from the world since COVID. Marnie works from home and retreats into reading, while Michael is shattered by his wife's departure and finds solace in walking the moors, alone. When a mutual friend invites them both on a coast-to-coast hike, Marnie and Michael find themselves thrown together as the other members of the group falter and bail out. As they traverse the rugged landscapes and stunning scenery of the Dales, Moors and Lake District, and the English weather throws everything it's got at them, these two lonely souls begin to kindle a warm, deep connection.

A tender, achingly romantic novel which is saved from schmaltz by its perfectly

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Children's Books



A Box Full of Murder by Janice Hallett

Puffin Books, £7.99 paperback

Murder mystery writer Janice Hallett's books for grown-ups include the best-selling The Appeal, now she's back with a children's novel full of codes to crack and

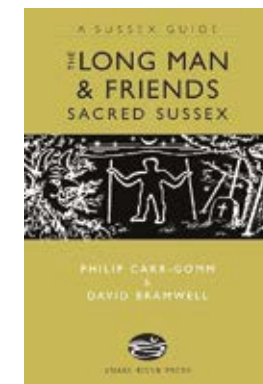
evidence to investigate!

When siblings Ava and Luke stumble upon a dusty box hidden in their attic, they have no idea they're about to open the door to an intriguing mystery. Inside, they find a trove of old letters, diary entries, newspaper clippings—and even secret audio recordings. Piece by piece, a long-buried, unsolved murder case begins to surface.

Determined to uncover the truth, Ava and

Luke set out to solve the decades-old crime. But the deeper they dig, the more dangerous the trail becomes. Because this mystery isn't just history—the killer may still be watching.

A cleverly structured murder mystery where YOU, the reader, must crack the clues to uncover the truth! Perfect for readers of 8+.



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July 2025 Gardening Journal

Article by Alex Bell
T: 01903 815065 M: 07866 747849

July is the climax of the summer garden but also a funny time in the gardening calendar. As the first flush of summer flowers fades, there can often be a lull in our borders before the riot of the late summer perennials and grasses really start to take off. Don't be disheartened there are plenty of choices to help to fill this gap and one way to help inspire you would be to get out and see what other gardeners have been planting in their gardens so ensure to get out and about and enjoy some time in someone else garden for a change.

Many gardeners are fond and familiar with scabiosas in shades of blue, lavender and even come across dark reds and black too. However, there is a lesser-known species that offers an almost nonstop succession of creamy yellow flowers – **Plant of the month Scabiosa ochroleuca.**

All Scabiosas, commonly known as pincushion flowers, are not only tough, they are drought tolerant and are great for wildlife, being a popular destination for bees and butterflies too. There is a lot to like about this Mediterranean perennial making Scabiosa ochroleuca, known as cream scabious, a magnificent addition to the pincushion family.

Scabiosa ochroleuca forms a clump of mid-green foliage with ovate to lance-shaped basal leaves that form the base for the dainty pin cushion like flowers. One look at the densely packed dome of tiny florets and you see right away where the pincushion name comes from! The height of flowering stems varies from species to species but with Scabiosa ochroleuca they protrude like shooting stars, on the dainty stems giving the plant a whimsical and airy appearance.

Originating in southern Europe Scabiosa are members of the Dipsacaceae family and are named for the contagious skin disease scabies,

which it was once thought to cure. Scabiosa ochroleuca is only one of four popular scabiosa species. Lavender varieties such as 'Butterfly Blue' are part of the columbaria species. Scabiosa caucasica offers favorites such as 'Fama Blue' and 'Perfecta Alba' and there are the more dramatic varieties of Scabiosa atropururea such as 'Scarlet,' 'Black' and 'Florist's Blue.'

Though pincushions can handle less-than-ideal conditions, they prefer fertile, well-drained soil and sunshine. Occasional pruning will stimulate new growth and deadheading will promote more flowers. Scabiosa are also rarely is bothered by pests and diseases, though some struggling plants may develop powdery mildew.

The Butter yellow flowers of this Scabious is one of the softest and loveliest of hues in the colour spectrum which provides one advantage with this one particular Scabious - it will blend in with nearly everything in your garden. One of my favourite combinations would be a simple combination with Stipa tenuissima – the texture of the feathery grasses providing the perfect backdrop to the pincushion like flowers.

Is there any such thing as the perfect flowering plant? If votes were cast then I think that Scabiosa ochroleuca would certainly get their share.

Jobs to be Done July: Ornamental Garden:

- Continue to deadhead herbaceous perennials and roses as flowers go over.
- Weed!!!
- Continue to edge borders.
- Cutback oriental poppies once flowered.
- Divide bearded irises if flowering is declining – re plant the youngest rhizomes.
- Deadhead roses.
- Trim evergreen hedges.
- Turn compost heaps.
- Cut back spent flowers of climbing hydrangea.
- Feed dahlias/cannas etc.
- Take cuttings of clematis.
- Sow biennials.

Vegetable Garden:

- Thin dessert apples and cooking apples.
- Sow spring cabbages and plant out winter cabbages.
- Water courgettes consistently to encourage a good crop.
- Mulch long term crops like brassicas
- Water fruit trees / bushes.



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Family Connections

Family research can lead in unexpected directions. When we discovered, however, that my wife could trace her descent from the Farnfold's of Steyning, that was quite a surprise.

It was a family which first established itself in Steyning during the reign of Henry V and they feature in Steyning's records for 225 years as bailiffs, constables, burgesses and jurymen. Indeed, two of them, Richard in 1472 and Thomas in 1623, became members of parliament for the town. At the peak of their prosperity they counted Gatewick, Wickham and Nash amongst their properties – and they also rented the Gatewick watermill, in exchange for fealty and a red rose, and were responsible for a further fifteen properties in the parish, including the *'Swanne Inn'* on the north side of the High Street and a tanyard.

Property owners had to keep the roads alongside their tenements fit for use. If ditches became blocked the mud and stone road surface could become a quagmire or deeply rutted, and roads might be blocked by piles of timber, by overgrown hedges, or by dung – so the courts kept a close eye on things. Peter Farnfold, in particular, was not co-operative. More than once each year between 1468 and 1481 the Court of Morowspeche had to chivy Peter, who would seem to have been an obdurate fellow, to deal with these issues.

His son, Michael, did better. His will of 1508 stipulated that *'myn Executors, within a short space after my decease, will bryng and lay 20 lodes of Stone betwene the Fullers broke [the Tanyard Lane stream] and the gret barn.'*

He also gave instructions for a *'stone of marbill'* to be laid on him in the Church and that there should be *'pictured thereon myself*



Fig. 6 — Costume. XVIth Century

my wife and my Children in laten after their desires.' Laten was an alloy of copper and the Reverend Cox, writing in 1921, said that, although the laten had been removed the pattern of the design on the *'marbill'* grave slab was still visible.

The family was also prosperous enough to recompense their executors handsomely. Sir Thomas left his executor not only £10 but *'my cast of Hawkes which are a-mewing neere Colebrooke and also my best horse which I shall have at the tyme of my death.'*

But the member of the family I would have liked to have met was Jane Farnfold who died in 1575. She sounds a kind and considerate person who gave *'to the poore people of Steyninge to be distributed at my Funerall, with the concente of the Churche Wardens, a quarter of £ wheate and a quarter of malte.'* A *'quarter'* of wheat? Dished out in the form of grain it may well have been enough for each poor family to make ten or more good sized loaves. The quarter of malted barley could have made an astonishing 40 to 50 barrels of beer – possibly enough for a barrel for each poor family. A subsequent entry went on to say: *'I frely forgive al such detts as are dewe to me by any inhabitante in Steninge towne'*.

Most of her specific bequests went to her son and daughters. Her son got *'all suche parcells of household stuffe as are in his house and my greate cawdreane and the trevate that bellongeth to yt'*. *'To my daughter Gravenor*

one dubbell suffrante of golde' [probably a *'sovereign'*]. The range of items left to another daughter, Dorothy, opens a further window on the complexion of a wealthy Tudor household. It included *'two great drypping panes, my goblete of sylver, a stone coupe covered with sylver and gelte, my beste fether bed, ye best bedstedall, ye bolster, too pillows'* and many other items.

Her servants and other dependents were also remembered, though less generously. To *'Margerye my mayde'* she gave *'3s 4d and mine old gowne'*, to Jane Surye *'my old peticote and one of my winter smoks'*. Mary Harding got *'a payre of shetes'* and Jane Staly just one.

It is satisfying to think that this cast of characters walked the same streets and passed many of the same buildings which we still do today.

Article by: Chris Tod - Steyning Museum.

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Copy Deadline for the August issue is 12th July, 2025 E&OE

Your Steyning, Bramber & Beeding is published monthly in the UK by Barawood Publishing Ltd. It is delivered to 3200 homes in Steyning, Bramber & Beeding. Printed on FSC accredited paper from managed forests using vegetable-based inks.

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