LOCAL NEWS 24-7

Contest brings out best story writers

AN APPEAL for entries for a writing competition with a £1,000 prize has had a good response.

The short story contest is organised by the HG Wells Festival, which is being held in Folkestone for the second year running.

After the deadline for entries was extended, more have been submitted

Reg Turnill, of the festival committee, said: "It is now going very well

"We have had around 30 entries

in total from which we will shortlist five in the junior category and five in the senior

"We were concerned about the lack of junior entries but now we have had quite a few, some from children as young as nine.

"Some are really very good. It is extraordinary what good quality they are from such young writers."

Mr Turnill has donated £1,000 as the prize for the junior winner. The senior winner will get £250 from The Grand, where the

festival is being held from September 17 to 19.

Penguin Books, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary, has donated boxed sets of its published works of Wells as prizes for the festival.

The weekend focuses on books written by Wells when he lived in the area.

Highlights include a dinner, a history walk and art show.

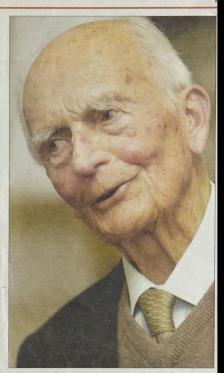
It will be opened by HG Wells' great-great-grandson Alex Wells.



HG Wells



Titles by the late author HG Wells



Reg Turnill at the launch of HG Wells Festival and short story competition Picture: Gary BrownePD1555135

Gary Glitter 't be served'

"He was getting in the passenger side and someone else was driving.

"It was definitely him. He seemed very relaxed and was not wearing a wig or trying to disguise his appearance. He still has the little beard."

'Surprised'

Father-of-two Mr Parker, 35, who runs the pub with part-ner Debi Foulds, added: "I have told my staff he will not be welcome in the pub. I was not that surprised to see him but would rather he was not living here at all."

Staff at Bar Vasa said they had not heard of Gadd living in the area, or of him being in the bar.

area, or of him being in the bar.

At the house where he was rumoured to be living, a pen-

sioner who lives there with her husband said she had not heard the stories. Shown a picture of Gadd, she said: "I think I may have seen him in the area."

Gadd was convicted of possessing child pornography and of committing obscene acts with two girls in Vietnam in 2006.

He was sentenced to three years in jail and deported to the UK.

Since then he has been

rumoured to be living in various parts of south and east Kent, including Ashford and Thanet. In May this year, he was pho-

tographed in London wearing a grey wig and without his trademark goatee beard.

■ Have you seen him? Contact our newsdesk on 01233 895816 or email tjamieson@thekmgro up.co.uk

ved on youth centre site

developers contributing towards community and play facilities.

There were four letters of objection to the development control committee, citing traffic concerns, the loss of green space, the

poor state of the roads, difficult access for emergency vehicles and the lack of parking.

Two previous applications for homes and one to use the land for open space had been refused.

Pupils go back to Tudor times



KING Henry VIII would probably have felt at home seeing children from Folkestone taking a step back in time at a Tudor festival in Dover

Many came dressed as Tudors to enjoy a wide range of activities including drama workshops, making a clay head of the King and learning about musical instruments, toys and games from that period.

The event was held around Dover Museum, which they were later allowed to explore.

Pupils from Folkestone's Primary Academy, Park Farm Road and also Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Parkfield Road, were among more than 350 children from across the county attending the festival.

Left, Youngsters from Folkestone visiting the Tudor festival, which was held in Dover

NEWS Alerts

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Fond memories of BBC reporter who broke the story of Apollo 13

By Chris Britcher

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TRIBUTES have been paid to Reg Turnill, the legendary BBC aerospace correspondent who reported on the most thrilling years of the space race, and who died this week.

Mr Turnill passed away after several months of ill health at the Pilgrims' Hospice in Ashford. He was 97.

Born in Dover, he spent recent years living in Sandgate, where he became an active member of the community.

He enjoyed a remarkable career which continued long after his retirement, supporting and founding the popular HG Wells short story competition in Folkestone each year and personally putting up the £1,000 top prize in order to inspire authors to write in the style of the famous storyteller. It forms a key part of the HG Wells Festival in the town which Mr Turnill helped create in 2009.

But it was his time with the BBC for which he will be most remembered.

Having started his Fleet Street career with the Press Association when he was 15, he joined the BBC in 1956 as assistant industrial correspondent. Two years later, he was promoted to air and space correspondent and found himself at the centre of the fast-emerging space race between the US and USSR.

Among his assignments was a trip to Moscow to cover the first manned space launch, and reporting from the US on the Apollo Moon missions. It was in 1970 he secured his biggest scoop when he was the first journalist in the world to break the news that Apollo 13 was in trouble when he heard the immortal words 'Houston we have a problem' as he made a late night visit to mission control.

Speaking of the moment years later, he said: "I was just leaving the deserted press centre when I heard the famous words. By 5am I'd broken the story. The astronauts were in deadly danger."

In 1969, he was on board the maiden flight of



JOURNALIST: Reg Turnill went on assignment to Nasa during the Apollo Moon missions

Concorde and continued his association with the BBC — most recently contributing to the corporation's coverage of the death of Neil Armstrong, the first man on the Moon.

In later years, he became an active member of the Sandgate Society, and a key player in the HG Wells Festival.

However, he found his strict rules had to be relaxed in order to appease a modern audience.

Speaking to KoS two years ago, he said: "I wanted people to write the stories by hand as a condition of entry to address the low standard of literacy and handwriting these days.

"It's an important art in itself and many of our most famous authors find that's the best way to do creative writing. My aim in offering the £1,000 prize was to get people to mimic what HG Wells did in the 1900s."

Organisers of this year's awards said: "His death is a great loss to many as he was a great man. Our thoughts are with his family."

Nick Spall, fellow of the British Interplanetary Society, added: "He was the astronaut who never made it to the Moon."

He leaves behind his wife Margaret and their two sons.





Reginald Turnill 1915 - 2013

This week we have lost a truly great Sandgatean. During the last decade, I was privileged to have been able to work with Reg on many of his space related projects and I learned so much from a man of incredible intelligence, integrity and modesty; a truly wonderful friend.

Reg spent his career covering all the manned space missions as well as planetary missions like Mariner, Pioneer, Viking and Voyager. He started in Fleet Street at the age of 15, and by 19 he was covering the national news on the Press



Association staff. After joining the BBC in Reg and those 'wretched' space tomatoes 1956 he covered the launch of Sputnik 1 and found it so exciting that he made space reporting his speciality. Of him the late George Low of NASA said "We indeed have come a long way, and we are fortunate that there have been men like Reg Turnill on hand to document our progress".

Reg did many hundreds of radio and TV broadcasts during his coverage of Apollo, but very few radio pieces have survived in the BBC archives, and hardly any TV pieces because recording facilities were very primitive in those days. On April 13, 1970 it was Reg was the first to break the news that during the night Apollo 13 had been crippled by an explosion when they radioed that now iconic message "Houston we have a problem". Reg was the only journalist in the Press Room at the time.



ra on eve of Apollo 11 launch

Six years ago Reg, who was still writing well into his 90s. was the world's oldest working space correspondent, and was given the Arthur C Clark lifetime achievement award. and Buzz Aldrin did a TV tribute to mark the occasion. Buzz, whom Reg and Margaret had known for over fifty years, also did the foreword for Reg's book "The Moonlandings".

A distant relative of Reg was a friend and benefactor of the poet John Clare and indeed gave the young, poverty stricken poet pen and paper to allow and encourage him to write. That generosity of spirit must

have been in the genes because Reg was always willing to help with his vast experience and he set up the annual H. G. Wells writing competition to similarly encourage the young and not so young to write.

In 1938 Reg married Margaret Hennings at Caxton Hall followed by a reception at the Streatham Ice Rink.

Our thoughts are with Margaret and his sons Graham and Mike.

BBC correspondent who followed the drama of the race to the Moon and banged the drum for Concorde



Reginald Turnill began his journalistic career at the age of 15 as a telephonist at the Press Association in the 1930s. He continued to work as a reporter for the news agency (after a break for war service) for a further ten years. Nothing about his work at that time suggesting the path his career was to take, but then his fortunes changed dramatically with his recruitment by the BBC in 1956. He started as assistant correspond-

He started as assistant correspondent on the industrial staff, with the idea that he might help to bring a little modernity to the coverage of news in the aviation field. By 1958 he had become the BBC's air and space correspondent, and a marvellous opportunity was suddenly open to him. He had landed the right job at precisely the right time.

Civil aviation was expanding exponentially as the jet age got under way. Space travel had dramatically become a reality with the launch of the Soviet artificial satellite Sputnik I on October 4, 1957, about which he had written. Suddenly, the world's two leading military and industrial powers, the US and USSR, were straining every nerve to get the first man in to space and then on to the Moon. Turnill at the BBC had a front row seat for the action.

As inter-service rivalry caused disaster after disaster in the US space programme, the Soviet Union's mysterious "Chief Designer" scored success after success with the launch of ever heavier satellites — while the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev rubbed in his country's supremacy in mocking speeches that derided the much smaller American satellites as "mere

oranges:
Turnill followed all this and reported
on the developments that led to the
Soviet Union launching Yuri Gagarin
as the first man in space in April 1961,
apparently to establish an unassailable
lead in the space race.

He was then to report on the establishment of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) in the US and to observe at close quarters the remarkable effort of will and technical expertise that allowed the US to win the space race, with the touchdown of Apollo II's landing module on July 21,



Mission Control, Houston, April 17, 1970: staff celebrate the safe return to earth of the Apollo 13 astronauts, after a near-disastrous explosion on board their spacecraft; the unfolding drama gave Turnill, above left, his greatest scoop

1969, and the astronaut Neil Armstrong making his "giant leap for mankind" on the lunar surface.

As Turnill reported on the build-up to the US's Moon landing preparations, he positioned himself close to Nasa's head of manned space flight, George Low, and from him learnt that it was to be the crew of Apollo II who would make the first attempt. From Nasa officials Turnill said that he subsequently learnt also that it had originally been intended that the more merital, outspoken scientist "Buzz" Aldrin was to have been the first man on the Moon.

In the event it was Armstrong, a man whose greater gravitas was, officials decided, more suitable for the momentous nature of the occasion, although at the time Nasa officials merely said that the change reflected the fact that it was physically easier for Armstrong to exit the lunar landing module first.

Although he had no special scientific knowledge, and was no astronomer, Turnill was always able to use his instinct, and his experience as a news reporter from his years at the Press Association, to give drama to his coverage of the details of the space race. What he lacked in technical knowledge he made up for by his tenacity "on the story" and his unassailable conviction of the fundamental importance ordevelopments in aerospace, in which he thought Britain should be playing its part. He was thrilled by the other aviation story of that annus mirabilis of 1969 — the first flight of Concorde.

Reginald Turnill was born at Dover in 1915. His father died when he was 4, and his mother married again. The

family moved to London where he was educated at schools in Raynes Park. He began his working life as a copytaker at the Press Association in 1930, within five years graduating to become a reporter himself, spending a period on a South Coast newspaper before returning to the PA in 1938.

At the outbreak of war in 1939 he was called up and served as a machineguner with The Middlesex Regiment. He achieved the rank of warrant officer but remained determined not to accept a commission. In 1946 he returned to the PA.

His period with the BBC covered not just the space race, but coincided with a

At Nasa he saw at close quarters American will and technical expertise

period of dramatic advances in civil aviation with the introduction of such pioneering airliners as the giant "jumbo" Boeing 747 and the Mach 2 Anglo-French Concorde. Turnill was the BBC reporter covering Concorde's maiden flight at Toulouse-Blagnac airport on March 2,1969. He remained an enthusiastic proselytiser for the supersonic airliner, amid all the criticism that was levelled at it on economic and environmental grounds.

But he always thought that his greatest scoop was his coverage of the Apollo 13 lunar flight, which almost became a disaster, in April 1970. He had been covering the flight at Mission Control at the Johnson Space Center, Houston, had gone home to dinner

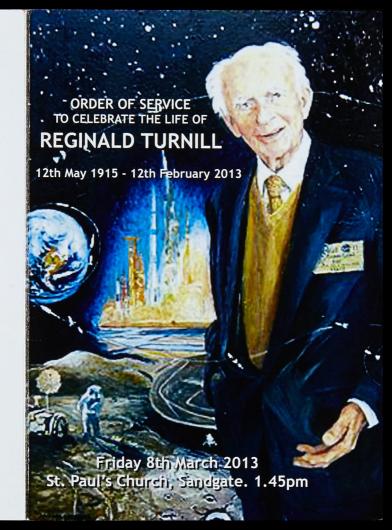
with his wife, who accompanied him on his US posting, and then popped back to JSC to check that "all was well." Just as he was leaving the centre finally to return home he heard the words "Houston, we've got a problem", coming in from the space craft.

"I went back to my desk and stayed there for the next three days," he recalled. In that time he was able to follow the dramatic events, as Houston and its experts wrestled to save the craft and the lives of its crew members after an explosion and the loss of two out of three fulc ells 56 hours into the mission. Turnill followed the story through to the fiery re-entry of the landing module through the Earth's atmosphere and the dramatic, but safe splashdown of the astronauts in the Pacific.

Turnill was not best pleased to be retired from the BBC on passing 60 but he continued to broadcast on a free-lance basis for the corporation, and wrote widely on aviation. Besides his own books, which included Moonslaught: The Full Story of Maris Race to the Moon (1969); Farnborough: The Story of RAE (1980); Celebrating Concorde (1994) and The Moonlandings: Ar Eyewitness Account (2003), he contributed to the Observers Book of Mannee Spaceflight, the Observer's Book of Unmanned Spaceflight and, in the 1980s edited Jame's Spaceflight Directory. It 2006 he won the Sin Arthur Clarke Life time Achievement Award.

Turnill married in 1938, Margare Hennings, and they had two sons.

Reginald Turnill, journalist, was born on May 12, 1915. He died on February 12, 2013



Prayers

Commendation

Exit Music: 'The Lark Ascending' R.Vaughan Williams (Recorded)



Painting by Janine Umbers

At Barham Crematorium

Blow The Wind Southerly (Kathleen Ferrier)

Committal

Piano Concerto Second Movement - Edvard Grieg

Entrance Music: 'Spitfire Prelude'- William Walton

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Hymn: The Lord is my Shepherd

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want; He makes me down to lie In pastures green; he leadeth me The quiet waters by.

My soul he doth restore again, And me to walk doth make Within the paths of righteousness, E'en for his own name's sake.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, Yet will I fear no ill: For thou art with me, and thy rod And staff me comfort still.

My table thou hast furnished In prsence of my foes; My head thou dost with oil anoint And my cup overflows.

Goodness and mercy all my life Shall surely follow me; And in God's house for evermore My dwelling-place shall be.

Reading - Recording of Genesis Read from space (Apollo 8)

Tributes-

Mr James Wilkinson Mr Lewis Bronze Mr Michael Turnill Mr Graham Turnill Hymn: One More Step Along The World I Go.

One more step along the world I go,
One more step along the world I go;
From the old things to the new,
Keep me travelling along with you:
And it's from the old I travel to the new;
Keep me travelling along with you.

Round the corners of the world I turn, More and more about the world I learn; All the new things that I see You'll be looking at along with me. And it's from the old I travel to the new; Keep me travelling along with you.

As I travel through the bad and good, Keep me travelling the way I should. Where I see no way to go, You'll be telling me the way, I know. And it's from the old I travel to the new; Keep me travelling along with you.

Give me courage when the world is rough, Keep me loving though the world is tough; Leap and sing in all I do, Keep me travelling along with you: And it's from the old I travel to the new; Keep me travelling along with you.

You are older than the world can be, You are younger than the life in me; Ever old and ever new, Keep me travelling along with you: And it's from the old I travel to the new; Keep me travelling along with you.